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THE BROKEN ROAD.¹

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

ONE OF THE LITTLE WARS.

THE campaign which Shere Ali directed on the borders of Chiltistan is now matter of history, and may be read of, by whoso wills, in the Blue-books and despatches of the time. Those documents, with their paragraphs and diaries and bare records of facts, have a dry-as-dust look about them which their contents very often belie. And the reader will not rise from the story of this little war without carrying away an impression of wild fury and reckless valour which will long retain its colours in his mind. Moreover, there was more than fury to distinguish it. Shere Ali turned against his enemies the lessons which they had taught him; and a military skill was displayed which delayed the result and thereby endangered the position of the British troops. For though at the first the neighbouring tribes and states, the little village republics which abound in those parts, waited upon the event as Phillips had foretold, nevertheless as the days passed, and the event still hung in the balance, they took heart of grace and gathered behind the troops to destroy their communications and cut off their supplies.

Dick Linforth wrote three letters to his mother, who was living over again the suspense and terror which had fallen to her lot a quarter of a century ago. The first letter was brought to the house under the Sussex Downs at twilight on an evening of late

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autumn, and as she recognised the writing for her son's a sudden weakness overcame her, and her hand so shook that she could hardly tear off the envelope.

'I am unhurt,' he wrote at the beginning of the letter, and tears of gratitude ran down her cheeks as she read the words. 'Shere Ali,' he continued, 'occupied a traditional position of defence in a narrow valley. The Kohara river ran between steep cliffs through the bed of the valley, and, as usual, above the cliffs on each side there were cultivated maidans or plateaus. Over the right hand maidan, the road—*our* road—ran to a fortified village. Behind the village a deep gorge, or nullah, as we call them in these parts, descending from a side glacier high up at the back of the hills on our right, cut clean across the valley like a great gash. The sides of the nullah were extraordinarily precipitous, and on the edge furthest from us stone sangars were already built as a second line of defence. Shere Ali occupied the village in front of the nullah, and we encamped six miles down the valley, meaning to attack in the morning. But the Chiltis abandoned their traditional method of fighting behind walls and standing on the defence. A shot rang out on the outskirts of our camp at three o'clock in the morning, and in a moment they were upon us. It was reckoned that there were fifteen thousand of them engaged from first to last in this battle, whereas we were under two thousand combatants. We had seven hundred of the Imperial Service troops, four companies of Gurkhas, three hundred men of the Punjab Infantry, three companies of the Oxfordshires, besides cavalry, mountain batteries and Irregulars. The attack was unexpected. We bestrode the road, but Shere Ali brought his men in by an old disused Buddhist road, running over the hills on our right hand, and in the darkness he forced his way through our lines into a little village in the heart of our position. He seized the bazaar and held it all that day, a few houses built of stone and with stones upon the roof which made them proof against our shells. Meanwhile the slopes on both sides of the valley were thronged with Chiltis. They were armed with jezails and good rifles stolen from our troops, and they had some old cannon—*sher bachas* as they are called. Altogether they caused us great loss, and towards evening things began to look critical. They had fortified and barricaded the bazaar, and kept up a constant fire from it. At last a sapper named Manders, with half a dozen Gurkhas behind him, ran across the open space, and while the Gurkhas shot through the loop-holes and kept the

fire down, Manders fixed his gun cotton at the bottom of the door and lighted the fuse. He was shot twice, once in the leg, once in the shoulder, but he managed to crawl along the wall of the houses out of reach of the explosion, and the door was blown in. We drove them out of that house and finally cleared the bazaar after some desperate fighting. Shere Ali was in the thick of it. He was dressed from head to foot in green, and was a conspicuous mark. But he escaped unhurt. The enemy drew off for the night, and we lay down as we were, dog-tired and with no fires to cook any food. They came on again in the morning, clouds of them, but we held them back with the gatlings and the maxims, and towards evening they again retired. To-day nothing has happened except the arrival of an envoy with an arrogant letter from Shere Ali, asking why we are straying inside the borders of his country "like camels without nose-rings." We shall show him why to-morrow. For to-morrow we attack the fort on the maidan. Good-night, mother. I am very tired.' And the last sentence took away from Sybil Linforth all the comfort the letter had brought her. Dick had begun very well. He could have chosen no better words to meet her eyes at the commencement than those three, 'I am unhurt.' But he could have chosen no worse with which to end it. For they had ended the last letter which her husband had written to her, and her mind flew back to that day, and was filled with forebodings.

But by the next mail came another letter in his hand, describing how the fort had been carried at the point of the bayonet, and Shere Ali driven back behind the nullah. This, however, was the strongest position of all, and the most difficult to force. The road which wound down behind the fort into the bed of the nullah and zig-zagged up again on the far side had been broken away, the cliffs were unscalable, and the stone sangars on the brow proof against shell and bullet. Shere Ali's force was disposed behind these stone breastworks right across the valley on both sides of the river. For three weeks the British force sat in front of this position, now trying to force it by the river-bed, now under cover of night trying to repair the broken road. But the Chiltis kept good watch, and at the least sound of a pick in the gulf below avalanches of rocks and stones would be hurled down the cliff-sides. Moreover, wherever the cliffs seemed likely to afford a means of ascent, Shere Ali had directed the water-channels, and since the nights were frosty these points were draped with ice as smooth as glass. Finally, however, Mrs. Linforth received a third letter which set

her heart beating with pride, and for the moment turned all her fears to joy.

‘The war is over,’ it began. ‘The position was turned this morning. The Chiltis are in full flight towards Kohara with the cavalry upon their heels. They are throwing away their arms as they run, so that they may be thought not to have taken part in the fight. We follow to-morrow. It is not yet known whether Shere Ali is alive or dead, and, mother, it was I—yes, I your son, who found out the road by which the position could be turned. I had crept up the nullah time after time towards the glacier at its head, thinking that if ever the position was to be taken it must be turned at that end. At last I thought that I had made out a way up the cliffs. There were some gullies and a ledge and then some rocks which seemed practicable, and which would lead one out on the brow of the cliff just between the two last sangars on the enemy’s left. I didn’t write a word about it to you before. I was so afraid I might be wrong. I got leave and used to creep up the nullah in the darkness to the tongue of the glacier with a little telescope and lie hidden all day behind a boulder working out the way, until darkness came again and allowed me to get back to camp. At last I felt sure, and I suggested the plan to Ralston the Political Officer, who carried it to the General-in-Command. The General himself came out with me, and I pointed out to him that the cliffs were so steep just beneath the sangars, that we might take the men who garrisoned them by surprise, and that in any case they could not fire upon us, while sharpshooters from the cliffs on our side of the nullah could hinder the enemy from leaving their sangars and rolling down stones. I was given permission to try and a hundred Gurkhas to try with. We left camp that night at half-past seven, and crept up the nullah with our blankets to the foot of the climb, and there we waited till the morning.’

The years of training to which Linforth had bent himself with a definite aim began, in a word, to produce their results. In the early morning he led the way up the steep face of cliffs, and the Gurkhas followed. One of the sharpshooters lying ready on the British side of the nullah said that they looked for all the world like a black train of ants. There were thirteen hundred feet of rock to be scaled, and for nine hundred of it they climbed undetected. Then from a sangar lower down the line where the cliffs of the nullah curved outwards they were seen and the alarm was given. But for awhile the defenders of the threatened position did not

understand the danger, and when they did a hail of bullets kept them in their shelters. Linforth followed by his Gurkhas was seen to reach the top of the cliffs and charge the sangars from the rear. The defenders were driven out and bayoneted, the sangars seized, and the Chilti force enfiladed while reinforcements clambered in support. 'In three hours the position which, for eighteen days had resisted every attack and held the British force immobile, was in our hands. The way is clear in front of us. Manders is recommended for the Victoria Cross. I believe that I am for the D.S.O. And above all the Road goes on!'

Thus characteristically the letter was concluded. Linforth wrote it with a flush of pride and a great joy. He had no doubt now that he would be appointed to the Road. Congratulations were showered upon him. Down upon the plains, Violet would hear of his achievement and perhaps claim proudly and joyfully some share in it herself. His heart leaped at the thought. The world was going very well for Dick Linforth that night. But that is only one side of the picture. Linforth had no thoughts to spare upon Shere Ali. If he had had a thought, it would not have been one of pity. Yet that unhappy Prince, with despair and humiliation gnawing at his heart, broken now beyond all hope, stricken in his fortune as sorely as in his love, was fleeing with a few devoted followers through the darkness. He passed through Kohara at daybreak of the second morning after the battle had been lost, and, stopping only to change horses, galloped off to the north.

Two hours later Captain Phillips mounted on to the roof of his house and saw that the guards were no longer at their posts.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A LETTER FROM VIOLET.

WITHIN a week the Khan was back in his Palace, the smoke rose once more above the roof-tops of Kohara, and a smiling shikari presented himself before Poulteney Sahib in the grounds of the Residency.

'It was a good fight, Sahib,' he declared, grinning from ear to ear at the recollection of the battles. 'A very good fight. We nearly won. I was in the bazaar all that day. Yes, it was a near thing. We made a mistake about those cliffs, we did not think they could be climbed. It was a good fight, but it is over. Now

when will your Excellency go shooting ? I have heard of some markhor on the hill.'

Poulteneysahib stared, speechless with indignation. Then he burst out laughing :

' You old rascal ! You dare to come here and ask me to take you out when I go shooting, and only a week ago you were fighting against us.'

' But the fight is all over, Excellency,' the shikari explained. ' Now all is as it was and we will go out after the markhor.' The idea that any ill-feeling could remain after so good a fight was one quite beyond the shikari's conception. ' Besides,' he said, ' it was I who threw the gravel at your Excellency's windows.'

' Why, that's true,' said Poulteneysahib, and a window was thrown up behind him. Ralston's head appeared at the window.

' You had better take him,' the Chief Commissioner said. ' Go out with him for a couple of days,' and when the shikari had retired, he explained the reason of his advice.

' That fellow will talk to you, and you might find out which way Shere Ali went. He wasn't among the dead, so far as we can discover, and I think he has been headed off from Afghanistan. But it is important that we should know. So long as he is free, there will always be possibilities of trouble.'

In every direction, indeed, inquiries were being made. But for the moment Shere Ali had got clear away. Meanwhile the Khan waited anxiously in the Palace to know what was going to happen to him ; and he waited in some anxiety. It fell to Ralston to inform him in durbar in the presence of his nobles and the chief officers of the British force that the Government of India had determined to grant him a pension and a residence rent-free at Jullundur.

' The Government of India will rule Chiltistan,' said Ralston. ' The word has been spoken.'

He went out from the Palace and down the hill towards the place where the British forces were encamped just outside the city. When he came to the tents, he asked for Mr. Linforth, and was conducted through the lines. He found Linforth sitting alone within his tent on his camp chair, and knew from his attitude that some evil thing had befallen him. Linforth rose and offered Ralston his chair, and as he did so a letter fluttered from his lap to the ground. There were two sheets, and Linforth stooped quickly and picked them up.

'Don't move,' said Ralston. 'This will do for me,' and he sat down upon the edge of the camp bed. Linforth sat down again on his chair and, as though he were almost unaware of Ralston's presence, he smoothed out upon his knee the sheets of the letter. Ralston could not but observe that they were crumpled and creased, as though they had been clenched and twisted in Linforth's hand. Then Linforth raised his head, and suddenly thrust the letter into his pocket.

'I beg your pardon,' he said, and he spoke in a spiritless voice. 'The post has just come in. I received a letter which—interested me. Is there anything I can do ?'

'Yes,' said Ralston. 'We have sure news at last. Shere Ali has fled to the north. The opportunity you asked for at Peshawur has come.'

Linforth was silent for a little while. Then he said slowly :

'I see. I am to go in pursuit ?'

'Yes !'

It seemed that Linforth's animosity against Shere Ali had died out. Ralston watched him keenly from the bed. Something had blunted the edge of the tool just when the time had come to use it. He threw an extra earnestness into his voice.

'You have got to do more than go in pursuit of him. You have got to find him. You have got to bring him back as your prisoner.'

Linforth nodded his head.

'He has gone north, you say ?'

'Yes. Somewhere in Central Asia you will find him,' and as Linforth looked up startled, Ralston continued calmly, 'Yes, it's a large order, I know, but it's not quite so large as it looks. The trade-routes, the only possible roads, are not so very many. No man can keep his comings and goings secret for very long in that country. You will soon get wind of him, and when you do you must never let him shake you off.'

'Very well,' said Linforth, listlessly. 'When do I start ?'

Ralston plunged into the details of the expedition and told him the number of men he was to take with him.

'You had better go first into Chinese Turkestan,' he said. 'There are a number of Hindu merchants settled there—we will give you letters to them. Some of them will be able to put you on the track of Shere Ali. You will have to round him up into a corner, I expect. And whatever you do, head him off Russian territory. For we want him. We want him brought back into

Kohara. It will have a great effect on this country. It will show them that the Sirkar can even pick a man out of the bazaars of Central Asia if he is rash enough to stand up against it in revolt.'

'That will be rather humiliating for Shere Ali,' said Linforth, after a short pause; and Ralston sat up on the bed. What in the world, he wondered, could Linforth have read in his letter, so to change him? He was actually sympathising with Shere Ali—he who had been hottest in his anger.

'Shere Ali should have thought of that before,' Ralston said sharply, and he rose to his feet. 'I rely upon you, Linforth. It may take you a year. It may take you only a few months. But I rely upon you to bring Shere Ali back. And when you do,' he added, with a smile, 'there's the Road waiting for you.'

But for once even that promise failed to stir Dick Linforth into enthusiasm.

'I will do my best,' he said quietly; and with that Ralston left him.

Linforth sat down in his chair and once more took out the crumpled letter. He had walked with the Gods of late, like one immune from earthly troubles. But his bad hour had been awaiting him. The letter was signed Violet. He read it through again, and this was what he read :

'This is the most difficult letter I have ever written. For I don't feel that I can make you understand at all just how things are. But somehow or other I do feel that this is going to hurt you frightfully, and, oh, Dick, do forgive me. But if it will console or help at all, know this,' and the words were underlined—as indeed were many words in Violet Oliver's letters—'that I never was good enough for you and you are well rid of me. I told you what I was, didn't I, Dick?—a foolish lover of beautiful things. I tried to tell you the whole truth that last evening in the garden at Peshawur, but you wouldn't let me, Dick. And I must tell you now. I never sent the pearl necklace back, Dick, although I told you that I did. I meant to send it back the night when I parted from the Prince. I packed it up and put it ready. But—oh, Dick, how can I tell you?—I had had an imitation one made just like it for safety, and in the night I got up and changed them. I couldn't part with it—I sent back the false one. Now you know me, Dick! But even now perhaps you don't. You remember the night in Peshawur, the terrible night? Mr. Ralston wondered why, after complaining that my window was unbolted, I unbolted it myself. Let me tell

you, Dick ! Mr. Ralston said that "theft" was the explanation. Well, after I tried to tell you in the garden and you would not listen, I thought of what he had said. I thought it would be such an easy way out of it, if the thief would come in while I was asleep and steal the necklace and go away again before I woke up. I don't know how I brought myself to do it. It was you, Dick ! I had just left you, I was full of thoughts of you. So I slipped back the bolt myself. But you see, Dick, what I am. Although I wanted to send that necklace back, I couldn't, *I simply couldn't*, and it's the same with other things. I would be very, very glad to know that I could be happy with you, dear, and live your life. But I know that I couldn't, that it wouldn't last, that I should be longing for other things, foolish things and vanities. Again, Dick, you are well rid of a silly vain woman, and I wish you all happiness in that riddance. I never would have made you a good wife. Nor will I make any man a good wife. I have not the sense of a dog. I know it, too ! That's the sad part of it all, Dick. Forgive me, and thanks, a thousand thanks, for the honour you ever did me in wanting me at all.' Then followed—it seemed to Linforth—a cry. 'Won't you forgive me, dear, dear Dick ! ' and after these words her name, 'Violet.'

But even so the letter was not ended. A postscript was added :

'I shall always think of the little dreams we had together of our future, and regret that I couldn't know them. That will always be in my mind. Remember that ! Perhaps some day we will meet. Oh, Dick, good-bye ! '

Dick sat with that letter before his eyes for a long while. Violet had told him that he could be hard, but he was not hard to her. He could read between the lines, he understood the struggle which she had had with herself, he recognised the suffering which the letter had caused her. He was touched to pity, to a greater humanity. He had shown it in his forecasts of the humiliation which would befall Shere Ali when he was brought back a prisoner to Kohara. Linforth, in a word, had shed what was left of his boyhood. He had come to recognise that life was never all black and all white. He tore up the letter into tiny fragments. It required no answer.

'Everything is just wrong,' he said to himself, gently, as he thought over Shere Ali, Violet, himself. 'Everything is just not what it might have been.'

And a few days later he started northwards for Turkestan.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

‘THE LITTLE LESS ——’

THREE years passed before Linforth returned on leave to England. He landed at Marseilles towards the end of September, travelled to his home, and a fortnight later came up from Sussex for a few days to London. It was the beginning of the autumn season. People were returning to town. Theatres were re-opening with new plays; and a fellow-officer, who had a couple of stalls for the first production of a comedy about which public curiosity was whetted, meeting Linforth in the hall of his club, suggested that they should go together.

‘I shall be glad,’ said Linforth. ‘I always go to the play with the keenest of pleasure. The tuning-up of the orchestra and the rising of the curtain are events to me. And, to be honest, I have never been to a first night before. Let us do the thing handsomely and dine together before we go. It will be my last excitement in London for another three or four years, I expect.’

The two young men dined together accordingly at one of the great restaurants. Linforth, fresh from the deep valleys of Chiltistan, was elated by the lights, the neighbourhood of people delicately dressed, and the subdued throb of music from muted violins.

‘I am the little boy at the bright shop window,’ he said with a laugh, while his eyes wandered round the room. ‘I look in through the glass from the pavement outside, and——’

His voice halted, and stopped; and when he resumed he spoke without his former gaiety. Indeed, the change of note was more perceptible than the brief pause. His friend conjectured that the words which Linforth now used were not those which he had intended to speak a moment ago.

‘——and,’ he said slowly, ‘I wonder what sort of fairyland it is actually to live and breathe in.’

While he spoke, his eyes were seeking an answer to his question, and seeking it in one particular quarter. A few tables away, and behind Linforth’s friend and a little to his right, sat Violet Oliver. She was with a party of six or eight people, of whom Linforth took no note. He had eyes only for her. Bitterness had long since ceased to colour his thoughts of Violet Oliver. And though he had not forgotten, there was no longer any living pain in his memories.

So much had intervened since he had walked with her in the rose-garden at Peshawur—so many new experiences, so much compulsion of hard endeavour. If his recollections went back to that garden, as at rare times they would, he was only conscious at the worst that his life was rather dull when tested by the high aspirations of his youth. There was less music in it than he had thought to hear. Instead of swinging in a soldier's march to the sound of drums and bugles down the road, it walked sedately. To use his own phrase, everything was—*just not*. There was no more in it than that. And indeed at the first it was almost an effort for him to realise that between him and this woman whom he now actually saw, after three years, there had once existed a bond of passion. But, as he continued to look, the memories took substance, and he began to wonder whether in her fairyland it was 'just not,' too. She had what she had wanted—that was clear. A collar of pearls, fastened with a diamond bow, encircled her throat. A great diamond flashed upon her bosom. Was she satisfied? Did no memory of the short week during which she had longed to tread the road of fire and stones, the road of high endeavour, trouble her content?

Linforth was curious. She was not paying much heed to the talk about the table. She took no part in it, but sat with her head a little raised, her eyes dreamily fixed upon nothing in particular. But Linforth remembered with a smile that there was no inference to be drawn from that not unusual attitude of hers. It did not follow that she was bored or filled with discontent. She might simply be oblivious. A remark made about her by some forgotten person who had asked a question and received no answer came back to Linforth and called a smile to his face. 'You might imagine that Violet Oliver is thinking of the angels. She is probably considering whether she should run upstairs and powder her nose.'

Linforth began to look for other signs; and it seemed to him that the world had gone well with her. She had a kind of settled look, almost a sleekness, as though anxiety never came near to her pillow. She had married, surely, and married well. The jewels she wore were evidence, and Linforth began to speculate which of the party was her husband. They were young people who were gathered at the table. In her liking for young people about her she had not changed. Of the men no one was noticeable, but Violet Oliver, as he remembered, would hardly have chosen a notice-

able man. She would have chosen someone with great wealth and no ambitions, one who was young enough to ask nothing more from the world than Violet Oliver, who would not, in a word, trouble her with a career. She might have chosen any one of her companions. And then her eyes travelled round the room and met his.

For a moment she gazed at him, not seeing him at all. In a moment or two consciousness came to her. Her brows went up in astonishment. Then she smiled and waved her hand to him across the room—gaily, without a trace of embarrassment, without even the colour rising to her cheeks. Thus might one greet a casual friend of yesterday. Linforth bethought him, with a sudden sting of bitterness which surprised him by its sharpness, of the postscript in the last of the few letters she had written to him. That letter was still vivid enough in his memories for him to be able to see the pages, to recognise the writing, and read the sentences.

‘I shall always think of the little dreams we had together of our future, and regret that I couldn’t know them. That will always be in my mind. Remember that !’

How much of that postscript remained true, he wondered, after these three years ? Very little, it seemed. Linforth fell to speculating, with an increasing interest, as to which of the men at her table she had mated with. Was it the tall youth with the commonplace good looks opposite to her ? Linforth detected now a certain flashiness in his well grooming which he had not noticed before. Or was it the fat insignificant young man three seats away from her ?

A rather gross young person, Linforth thought him—the offspring of some provincial tradesman who had retired with a fortune and made a gentleman of his son.

‘Well, no doubt he has the dibs,’ Linforth found himself saying with an unexpected irritation, as he contemplated the possible husband. And his friend broke in upon his thoughts.

‘If you are going to eat any dinner, Linforth, it might be as well to begin ; we shall have to go very shortly.’

Linforth fell to accordingly. His appetite was not impaired, he was happy to notice, but, on the whole, he wished he had not seen Violet Oliver. This was his last night in London. She might so easily have come to-morrow instead, when he would already have departed from the town. It was a pity.

He did not look towards her table any more, but the moment her party rose he was nevertheless aware of its movement. He was conscious that she passed through the restaurant towards the

lobby at no great distance from himself. He was aware, though he did not raise his head, that she was looking at him.

Five minutes afterwards the waiter brought to him a folded piece of paper. He opened it and read :

‘Dick, won’t you speak to me at all? I am waiting.—VIOLET.’

Linforth looked up at his friend.

‘There is someone I must go and speak to,’ he said. ‘I won’t be five minutes.’

He rose from the table and walked out of the restaurant. His heart was beating rather fast, but it was surely curiosity which produced that effect. Curiosity to know whether, with her, things were—just not, too. He passed across the hall and up the steps. On the top of the steps she was waiting for him. She had her cloak upon her shoulders, and in the background the gross young man waited for her without interposing—the very image of a docile husband.

‘Dick,’ she said quickly, as she held out her hand to him, ‘I did so want to talk to you. I have to rush off to a theatre. So I sent in for you. Why wouldn’t you speak to me?’

That he should have any reason to avoid her she seemed calmly and completely unconscious. And so unembarrassed was her manner that even with her voice in his ears and her face before him, delicate and pretty as of old, Dick almost believed that never had he spoken of love to her, and never had she answered him.

‘You are married?’ he asked.

Violet nodded her head. She did not, however, introduce her husband. She took no notice of him whatever. She did not mention her new name.

‘And you?’ she asked.

Linforth laughed rather harshly.

‘No.’

Perhaps the harshness of the laugh troubled her. Her forehead puckered. She dropped her eyes from his face.

‘But you will,’ she said in a low voice.

Linforth did not answer, and in a moment or two she raised her head again. The trouble had gone from her face. She smiled brightly.

‘And the Road?’ she asked. She had just remembered it. She had almost an air of triumph in remembering it. All these old memories were so dim. But at the awkward difficult moment, by an inspiration, she had remembered the great long-cherished aim

of Dick Linforth's life. The Road ! Dick wondered whether she remembered too that there had been a time when for a few days she had thought to have a share herself in the making of that road which was to leave India safe.

'It goes on,' he said quietly. 'It has passed Kohara. It has passed the fort where Luffe died. But I beg your pardon. Luffe belongs to the past, too, very much to the past—more even than I do.'

Violet paid no heed to the sarcasm. She had not heard it. She was thinking of something else. It seemed that she had something to say, but found the utterance difficult. Once or twice she looked up at Dick Linforth and looked down again and played with the fringe of her cloak. In the background the docile husband moved restlessly.

'There's a question I should like to ask,' she said quickly, and then stopped.

Linforth helped her out.

'Perhaps I can guess the question.'

'It's about—' she began, and Linforth nodded his head.

'Shere Ali ?' he said.

'Yes,' replied Violet.

Linforth hesitated, looking at his companion. How much should he tell her ? he asked himself. The whole truth ? If he did, would it trouble her ? He wondered. He had no wish to hurt her. He began warily :

'After the campaign was over in Chiltistan I was sent after him.'

'Yes. I heard that before I left India,' she replied.

'I hunted him,' and it seemed to Linforth that she flinched. 'There's no other word, I am afraid. I hunted him—for months, from the borders of Tibet to the borders of Russia. In the end I caught him.'

'I heard that, too,' she said.

'I came up with him one morning, in a desert of stones. He was with three of his followers. The only three who had been loyal to him. They had camped as best they could under the shelter of a boulder. It was very cold. They had no coverings and little food. The place was as desolate as you could imagine—a wilderness of boulders and stones stretching away to the round of the sky, level as the palm of your hand, with a ragged tree growing up here and there. If we had not come up with them that day I think they would have died.'

He spoke with his eyes upon Violet, ready to modify his words at the first evidence of pain. She gave that evidence as he ended. She drew her cloak closer about her and shivered.

‘What did he say?’ she asked.

‘To me? Nothing. We spoke only formally. All the way back to India we behaved as strangers. It was easier for both of us. I brought him down through Chiltistan and Kohara into India. I brought him down—along the Road which at Eton we had planned to carry on together. Down that road we came together—I the captor, he the prisoner.’

Again Violet flinched.

‘And where is he now?’ she asked in a low voice.

Suddenly Linforth turned round and looked down the steps, across the hall to the glass walls of the restaurant.

‘Did he ever come here with you?’ he asked. ‘Did he ever dine with you there amongst the lights and the merry-makers and the music?’

‘Yes,’ she answered.

Linforth laughed, and again there was a note of bitterness in the laughter.

‘How long ago it seems! Shere Ali will dine here no more. He is in Burma. He was deported to Burma.’

He told her no more than that. There was no need that she should know that Shere Ali, broken-hearted, ruined and despairing, was drinking himself to death with the riffraff of Rangoon, or with such of it as would listen to his abuse of the white women and his slanders upon their honesty. The contrast between Shere Ali’s fate and the hopes with which he had set out was shocking enough. Yet even in his case so very little had turned the scale. Between the fulfilment of his hopes and the great failure what was there? If he had been sent to Ajmere instead of to England, if he and Linforth had not crossed the Meije to La Grave in Dauphiné, if a necklace of pearls he had offered had not been accepted—very likely at this very moment he might be reigning in Chiltistan, trusted and supported by the Indian Government, a helpful friend gratefully recognised. To Linforth’s thinking it was only ‘just not’ with Shere Ali, too.

Linforth saw his companion coming towards him from the restaurant. He held out his hand.

‘I have got to go,’ he said.

‘I too,’ replied Violet. But she detained him. ‘I want to

tell you,' she said, hurriedly. 'Long ago—in Peshawur—do you remember? I told you there was someone else—a better mate for you than I was. I meant it, Dick, but you wouldn't listen. There is still the someone else. I am going to tell you her name. She has never said a word to me—but—but I am sure. It may sound mean of me to give her away—but I am not really doing that. I should be very happy, Dick, if it were possible. It's Phyllis Casson. She has never married. She is living with her father at Camberley.' And before he could answer she had hurried away.

But Linforth was to see her again that night. For when he had taken his seat in the stalls of the theatre he saw her and her husband in a box. He gathered from the remarks of those about him that her jewels were a regular feature upon the first nights of new plays. He looked at her now and then during the intervals of the acts. A few people entered her box and spoke to her for a little while. Linforth conjectured that she had dropped a little out of the world in which he had known her. Yet she was contented. On the whole that seemed certain. She was satisfied with her life. To attend the first productions of plays, to sit in the restaurants, to hear her jewels remarked upon—her life had narrowed sleekly down to that, and she was content. But there had been other possibilities for Violet Oliver.

Linforth walked back from the theatre to his club. He looked into a room and saw an old gentleman dozing alone amongst his newspapers.

'I suppose I shall come to that,' he said grimly. 'It doesn't look over cheerful as a way of spending the evening of one's days,' and he was suddenly seized with the temptation to go home and take the first train in the morning for Camberley. He turned the plan over in his mind for a moment, and then swung away from it in self-disgust. He retained a general reverence for women, and to seek marriage without bringing love to light him in the search was not within his capacity.

'That wouldn't be fair,' he said to himself, 'even if Violet's tale were true.' For with his reverence he retained a modesty. The next morning he took the train into Sussex instead, and was welcomed by Sybil Linforth to the house under the Downs. In the warmth of that welcome at all events there was nothing that was 'just not.'

THE END.

THE LAST PROOF.

AN EPILOGUE TO ANY BOOK.

Hic Finis chartæque viaeque.

FINIS at last—the end, the End, the END !
 No more of paragraphs to prune or mend ;
 No more blue pencil, with its ruthless line,
 To blot the phrase “particularly fine” ;
 No more of “slips,” and “galleys,” and “revises,”
 Of words transmogrified, and “wild surmises” ;
 No more of *n*’s that masquerade as *u*’s,
 No nice perplexities of *P*’s and *Q*’s ;
 No more mishaps of *ante* and of *post*,
 That most mislead when they should help the most ;
 No more of “friend” as “fiend,” and “warm” as “worm,”
 Of “waist” for “waste,” and for “inform” “infirm” ;
 No more of those mysterious freaks of fate
 That make us bless when we should execrate ;
 No more of those last blunders that remain
 Where we no more can set them right again ;
 No more apologies for doubtful data ;
 No more fresh facts that figure as Errata ;
 No more in short, O Type, of wayward lore
 From thy most *un*-Pierian fount—NO MORE !

So spoke PAPYRIUS. But his hand meanwhile
 Went vaguely seeking for the vacant file

Late stored with long array of notes, but now
Bare-wired and barren as a leafless bough ;
And even as he spoke, his mind began
Again to dream, to purpose and to plan.

There is no end to Labour 'neath the sun ;
There is no end to labouring—but One ;
And though ' we twitch (or not) our mantle blue,'
' To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.'

AUSTIN DOBSON.

THE ALPS ONCE MORE.

BY FREDERIC HARRISON.

LETTER I.

Montreux: October 1, 1907.

I LIVE again—I have breathed once more the air of the ‘iced mountain top’—my heart expands at the sight of my beloved Alps. After fifty-six years the mountain fever throbs in my old veins. Bunyan’s Pilgrim did not hail the vision of the Delectable Hills with more joy and consolation.

Yes! you were wise to urge me to seek rest and change of thought in my old haunts, even though you were unable to travel yourself. There is no such rest, such change, in the world. I have been here but ten days, and it seems ten months. The air, the sounds, the landscape, the life—all are new—and yet how full of old memories—how fresh to-day and yet how far off in remembrance. Half a century has not dimmed the glory of these eternal rocks, of these familiar marvels. And old age only makes us more able to drink in all their charm, for it makes us dwell on them with more patient love and reverence, with a wider knowledge of all that Nature means, all that it inspires, of all the myriad chords whereby it attunes the soul.

Once more—perhaps for the last time—I listen to the unnumbered tinkling of the cow-bells on the slopes—‘the sweet bells of the sauntering herd’—to the music of the cicadas in the sunshine, and the shouts of the neat-herd lads, echoing back from Alp to Alp. I hear the burbling of the mountain rill, I watch the emerald moss of the pastures gleaming in the light, and now and then the soft white mist creeping along the glen, as our poet says, ‘puts forth an arm and creeps from pine to pine.’ And the wild flowers, even in this waning season of the year, the delicate lilac of the dear autumn crocus,¹ which seems to start up elf-like out of the lush grass, and the coral beads of the rowan, the beech-trees just begun to wear their autumn jewelry of old gold.

As I stroll about these hills, more leisurely, more thoughtfully

¹ The *Colchicum Alpinum*, that lovely, poisonous little plant once famous in medicine.

than I used to do of old in my hot mountaineering days, I have tried to think out what it is that makes the Alpine landscape so marvellous a tonic to the spirit—what is the special charm of it to those who have once felt all its inexhaustible magic. Other lands have rare beauties, wonders of their own, sights to live in the memory for ever. In France, in Italy, in Spain, in Greece, and in Turkey, I hold in memory many a superb landscape. From boyhood upwards I thirsted for all kinds of Nature's gifts, whether by sea, or by river, lake, mountain, or forest. For sixty years at least I have roved about the white cliffs, the moors, the riversides, lakes, and pastures of our own islands from Penzance to Cape Wrath, from Beachy Head to the Shetlands. I love them all. But they cannot touch me, as do the Alps, with the sense at once of inexhaustible loveliness and of a sort of conscious sympathy with every mode of man's heart and brain. Why, then, is this so?

I find it in the immense range of the moods in which Nature is seen in the Alps, at least by those who have fully absorbed all the forms, sights, sounds, wonders, and adventures they offer. An hour's walk will show them all in profound contrast and yet in exquisite harmony. The Alps form a book of Nature as wide and as mysterious as Life.

Earth has no scenes of placid fruitfulness more balmy than the banks of one of the larger Lakes, crowded with vineyards, orchards, groves and pastures, down to the edge of its watery mirror, wherein, beside a semi-tropical vegetation, we see the image of some mediæval castle, of some historic tower, and thence the eye strays up to sunless gorges, swept with avalanches, and streaming with feathery cascades; and higher yet one sees against the sky line ranges of terrific crags, girt with glaciers, and so often wreathed in storm clouds.

All that Earth has of most sweet, softest, easiest, most suggestive of languor and love, of fertility and abundance—all is seen in one vision beside all that Nature has most hard, most cruel, most unkind to Man—where life is one long weary battle with a frost-bitten soil, and every peasant's hut has been built up stone by stone, and log by log, with sweat and groans, and wrecked hopes. In a few hours one may pass from an enchanted garden, where every sense is satiated, and every flower and leaf and gleam of light is intoxication, up into a wilderness of difficult crags and yawning glaciers, which men can reach only by hard-earned skill, tough muscles and iron nerves.

All this is seen in the Alps in one vision and floods the mind with the infinitely varied contrasts which roll on side by side in the aspects of Nature and in the course of Human Life. To know, to feel, to understand the Alps is to know, to feel, to understand Humanity.

The Ocean in all its moods has these contrasts—its terrible furies, its vast horizon, its glassy calm. Its ever-changing aspects open to the mind resources and spaces infinite, with ominous presages of storm: resources such as promise marvellous new means to man, presages which threaten him with cruel death. But Ocean has no history, no fruits, no signs of human victory and achievement. With all its limitless volume and ceaseless motion, it is to Man's eye a lifeless inhuman waste, as indeed Byron felt.

And so, too, is the Desert of Africa, the Veldt, the Prairies of the Far West and the Pampas. All have their visions of beauty; and to some spirits they speak things which very few can tell us in words. A moor that confronts Snowdon or Helvellyn, or one from which we watch the Cuillins of Skye or the Blue Hills of Killarney—all have their special charm. But they are Nature out of touch with Man—and this is no doubt the source of their power to move us with a sense of inspiration or of rest.

Italy has history, beauty, variety, and so indeed has Southern France. But with all their beauty and power over the imagination and the memory, neither of these historic lands, apart from their mountains—and the Alps of course are in France, in Italy, in Germany, as well as in Switzerland—neither Italy nor France, nor Germany, as distinct from their great mountain chains, possesses those thrilling contrasts of exquisite loveliness, of rich abundance, side by side with appalling shapes of Nature in her most majestic scorn and wrath.

Only the Alps have these deep tragic contrasts, washing out the soul, as tragedy does, with pity and terror. The Alps are international, European, Humanitarian. Four written languages are spoken in their valleys, and ten times as many local patois. The Alps are not specially Swiss: we used to think they were English—they belong equally to four nations of Europe: they are the *sanatorium* and the *diversorium* of the civilised world, the refuge, the asylum, the second home of men and women famous throughout the centuries for arts, literature, thought, religion. The poet, the philosopher, the dreamer, the patriot, the exile, the bereaved, the reformer, the prophet, the hero—have all found in the Alps

a haven of rest, a new home where the wicked cease from troubling, where they need neither fear nor suffer. The happy and the thoughtless, the thinker and the sick—are alike at home here. The patriot exile inscribed on his house on Lake Leman—*omne solum forti patria*. What he might have written is—*omnibus hoc solum patria*. To young and old, to strong and weak, to wise and foolish alike, the Alps are a second Fatherland. And yet here, for my part, I think more and more of my own Fatherland.

LETTER II.

Col de Jaman : October 2, 1907.

I AM just back from a glorious stroll up to Jaman. Do you remember how Byron tells us in his Diary of his ride over the pass from Vevey towards the Oberland, just ninety years ago in this very autumn season. He jots down in his Letters and Diary the sensation of delight it gave him, great traveller as he then was. Never had he seen such an ideal of pastoral life—not even in the mountains of Albania or Greece. I saw that luscious valley to-day through Byron's eyes. The Lake was gleaming in the Sun, fringed with scattered hamlets, chalets, villas and gardens—changed, alas! since Byron wrote his poem on Chillon, since Julie and Saint-Preux whispered together in the bosquets—but not yet spoiled—more cultivated, civilised, and modernised, but even richer in vegetation, more crowded with human enjoyments.

I passed up through orchards and groves of chestnut, acacia, and beech woods, past many a sub-tropical terrace, *berceau*, and *parterre*, such as we see only here, in Italy, and along the Mediterranean. Then came the open pastures, deep with lush grass in their second and third crop, studded with brown, pitchy, roomy log-built chalets, each a confused mass of *greniers*, cowsheds, wooden balconies, and spreading eaves. The ceaseless cow-bells tinkled in a gentle but mild harmony, in scattered groups far and near, whilst high above the herds were being gathered and brought down to their winter stalls, amidst incessant shouts of the herds-men, re-echoed from the crags. Far and near the eye roamed over hanging valleys clothed with woods and copses of larch, pine, and mountain ash, thence to distant lower plains—all gleaming with toothsome pasture, gay wild flowers, inexhaustible industry, and healthy homes.

Hour by hour I trudged on upwards far more leisurely than

when I trod this path fifty years ago—more slowly but more full of thought—and indeed quite as happy and elated as then in my muscular and idle youth. Right and left many thousands of feet above one rose the bare and cruel teeth of Jaman and of Naye, a range of serrated crags, seamed with *coulloirs*, down which in spring torrents of snow and rock tumble and crash and tear deep rents in the precipice. From time to time my path crossed an avalanche track, down which six months earlier were wont to thunder masses which could crush a village and flood a plain. Many a tall pine lay torn across the track, snapped in two or wrenched up by its roots. What a symbol of a wrecked life is the stump of a whitened trunk, blasted by lightning or battered down by a volley of rocks, as it lies helpless in the midst of a delicious copse that seems planted only for man's enjoyment and use !

And then the highest pines were passed and the path had to zigzag amidst stones as sharp as knives. There at length desolation showed itself in its solitude and its nakedness. There the hardiest pines could not endure the blasts of autumn, the ice of winter. A goat here and there could pick some weeds for a week or two yet. But to-morrow, it may be, in a few short weeks certainly, these bare pinnacles and ridges would be deep beneath a mantle of snow, coated with hard ice, and inaccessible except for an hour or two to any but the hardiest mountaineer, and that only with all the resources experience can give.

At last I stood upon the topmost crag ; and what a vision it opened ! Far to the east was the line of Oberland ranges—the white peaks of Jungfrau and Wetterhorn, Giant and Monk—to the South the silver aiguilles of Mont Blanc, the Dent du Midi, all his sullen fangs powdered with fresh snow, the Diablerets and the long, rasping vista of the Savoy Alps ; Westwards the soft expanse of Leman, Swiss lowlands, and distant Jura, studded with busy towns, thriving villages, orchards, pastures, churches, vineyards in their flowing vintages, industry, plenty, peace, and health, as if Earth and Man had combined to frame a Paradise.

All this in one inexhaustible panorama. All that Nature has of sweetest, richest, dearest—of hardest, wildest, most grim, most deathly. Satiated with the splendour and the manifold sides of this landscape, I slowly tramped down across rocks, meadows and orchards, and as I came down at last upon the beaming lake-side, I felt it would almost be a relief if only, like one of Rousseau's *petits maîtres*, I could vent the emotion in tears.

There is hardly a spot round this most poetic and historic corner of Europe, this Lake Leman and its neighbouring valleys and mountains, but what recalls to us some line of poetry, some passage of romance, a great literary triumph, a memorable conflict, an illustrious career, an heroic death. Poets made the charm of Greece. But poets, romancers, dramatists, moralists, historians, theologians, artists—all combine to give a special halo of charm to the Alps and the Alpine world at large. Byron, Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibbon, Shelley, Coleridge, Turner, Ruskin, Schiller, Manzoni, Scott—have all stamped on the mind of Europe their special ideas of this region.

Rousseau was the first to see its poetry, but he saw only one side of it. Coleridge chanted a magnificent Hymn in the valley of Mont Blanc. Shelley loved the Sea too much to be the true lover of the Alps. The lover, the poet, the Prophet of the Alps is Byron. Only he felt all the beauty, all the majesty, all the humanity, all the terror of the Alps—the pastoral simplicity, the love-lorn memories, the flashing storms, thundering avalanches, stupendous cataracts of the higher Alps, the awful solitudes of the Upper Snowfields, where Man stands fearless and even masterful face to face with the very Spirit of Earth.

All this only Byron saw and felt and told. Who could have written 'Manfred' but Byron? Where could Byron have placed Manfred but in the Alps? Can we imagine Manfred, even on Scafell or on the Puy de Dôme? Byron and the Alps are of kin. Two others of our men knew the Alps better than Byron, even saw their charm more truly, but not their awe nor their majesty with equal power. By the side of Byron we have to place both Ruskin and Turner.

In the Alps I sometimes frame in a single view an imaginary panorama of the long history of Man and Man's earth. As I look down from the rocks which tower above Glion I realise how those fierce fangs of the mighty Dent, of Diablerets, of d'Argentière, the long spurs of Chablais in Savoy, are themselves but the *débris* of primeval Himalayas, from which monstrous glaciers descended to scoop out the lake. I see in the mind's eye the prehistoric tribes, whose origin, race, language, manners no man now can tell us, building out into the shallows of the Lake their huts on piles, to secure a home from enemies and beasts. I see them fishing, hunting, weaving and fighting, with needles and hooks of bone, knives and axes of stone—at the dawn of civilisation in Europe.

I see hordes of barbarians from North and East storming the Roman camps, and driving back the legions on their road to the Eternal City. I watch the swarms of Hun, Burgundian, Aleman, and Goth, as they tramp along the military roads of the Empire on which Cæsar and Hadrian, Aurelius, Constantine, and Julian, were used to post out and home, from the Seine and the Rhine to the Tiber. I see the monks and Christian missions pushing their way up into the pagan valleys, and planting here and there an abbey and a church. I see the ebb and flow of feudal Lord and free town, the castle built out into the Lake or crowning some dominant rock, the watch towers, walls and gates of the burgher militia, the deadly tussle of Savoy, Hapsburg, Zähringer, and Nassau. I hear the fierce quarrels and fiercer battles of Catholic and Reformer, the deadly fight of one hundred years which ended in drawn battle and equal partition of the soil and of rule.

From hence I perceive the hills that look down on the earlier homes of Swiss liberty, and the bloody field of Morat where proud Burgundy met his second crushing blow. Far and wide, from Leman to the Jura, lies a land of plenty, industry, peace and freedom—the refuge of men hunted by priest and king. The extreme horizon almost touches the asylum of the wonderful old man who shook altars and thrones with a pen that dripped sulphuric acid and shot electric sparks. Beneath my feet lies the home of Rousseau, the scenes of his morbid imagination, his sickly egoism, his inimitable witchery of words. Ah! now I see the hillside where the historian wrote the last chapter of his last volume and sighed to feel that it was at an end. Byron, Shelley, Ruskin, poets, historians, divines, have made every village memorable in the literature of the world. And from Cæsar to Charlemagne, from Rudolph to Napoleon, every great ruler in Europe has graven his record on the Alps.

We are apt to fancy that the charm of the Alps lies in Nature, unalloyed with life and untouched by man. Far from it! The whole region, from its physical form, its central position, its barriers and gates between the nations and the tongues, is the neutral ground and highway of Europe. Its passes, from Hannibal's time to Napoleon, are memorable in the crises of history. For centuries since Roman times few who leave their own country fail to find themselves there. And, for at least two, if not three, centuries, European literature and poetry ring with its local memories.

The vast Alpine semicircle which stretches from Toulon to

Trieste was no doubt impressive and wild in the primitive ages, but it was not then beautiful and enchanting. To Livy and Cæsar, to Horace and Virgil, it meant difficulties, dangers, desolation. To St. Bernard, to Dante, to Chaucer, even to Milton, mountains were the Valley of the Shadow of Death. In the Middle Ages much of the Alpine region was a monotonous forest, a waste prairie. It was only as the valleys began to teem with abundance and culture, as homesteads were pushed up higher and higher towards the upper pastures, as paths were cut across the neck of the dividing ridges, as villages and bell towers rose on bare mountain sides, as vines, orchards, exotic plants, and southern trees were planted in the sheltered plains—it was only then that every traveller felt the supreme beauty of this land.

See a wooded gorge at the first glance as we catch it from the road ! Well ! it is a pine forest like any other. But stop and watch it closer. The whole valley teems with clearings, rich pastures, cattle byres, log cabins, chapelries, roads, bridges, belfries—each wrung by the toil of generations from a soil by nature barren and unkind. The paths mount up in long serpentine spirals from ledge to ledge, leaping across roaring torrents in dizzy arches and piercing precipices in corridors. A thousand feet above the lake on a shelving lawn there seems to stand a grey rock. We look more steadily, and lo ! it is a tiny church. We can hear its bell softly chiming. We can almost watch the peasant women gathering round it at Angelus ! 'Tis some *Maria zum Schnee*, some *Madonna del Sasso*. There on a stony plateau or scanty clearing, twice as high as our Snowdon, there is life, industry, home, devotion.

The traveller lives their life and sees their achievements. Even on each peak the cairn of rude blocks, heaped up as a landmark and beacon, testifies to the triumph of man over all the obstacles of ungracious Nature. The poet in his most perverse mood never wrote a falser word than when he said in his mad way—'Man marks the Earth with ruin.' No ! Man clothes the Earth with beauty, charm, and fruit. And nowhere on this planet is this seen in such completeness, as when in this great Alpine world we find how Man has made bounteous and glorious a tract which at first was hopeless waste, and which still in some aspects seems to overwhelm the mind with awe and to paralyse the heart with horror.

When I first saw these mountains and valleys in my early

Oxford days—can it really be fifty-six years ago and more?—I was carried out of all good sense and self-control by the fascination of this new transcendent world, I deserted my friends and comrades, I raced about the crags and rattled down the snow glissades, tramped through the night, rose to see the dawn in mid-summer, and behaved like a youth in a state of delirium. I never saw a fresh peak but I thirsted to stand on it. I sought to be rid of guides, companions, engagements, impediments, to turn night into day, to turn travelling into a race, to slide down every *coulloir* and bathe in every glacier pool. I am less foolish now. And if I plod along with an old walking-stick, in lieu of an axe, if I seldom go many hundred yards without halting to gaze and ponder and gaze again, I now love best the middle heights, pastures, and beaming woodlands, where the snow peaks form just the setting of the picture. 'Tis perhaps to-day the fortieth time that I look on this perennial scene of wonder and joy. And never have I seen it with such inward delight—delight that is shadowed only by this—that I cannot have you to share it with me.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF CASABLANCA.

THE appearance of Casablanca, as seen from a distance, is very deceptive. From many points of view it seems a large fortified Eastern city: in reality it is not large; except the walls there is nothing that can be called a fortification, and it has no geographical, and very little architectural, right to be called Eastern.

The town stands almost on a level with the sea, on a little promontory, a position which enables it to face almost north, as though anxious to attract the attention of ships which might otherwise pass it by unnoticed. Despite this peculiarity, very many vessels, especially in the season of sea mists, overshoot the low-lying town, and have to work their way back up the featureless coast.

Thanks to a reef, invisible at most tides, the apparently open roadstead in front of the town is fairly sheltered from many winds. It was the attempt to improve the shipping facilities, and build breakwaters to make the work of lighters possible in any but very bad weather, which led to the late troubles. The town is completely surrounded by walls, which, on the sea side, almost follow the line of high water. From the sea front, where the European quarter is, the ground slopes gently towards the back part of the town, which is occupied by the Jewish and Moorish quarters, and which are therefore not completely hidden from view from the sea. This fact was of considerable use to the French warships, and made it easier than it would otherwise have been to spare the European quarter, and to pour their shells on the upper part of the town.

Outside the walls, a broad green belt of gardens, dotted with the country houses of English merchants, divides the town from the treeless rolling country of Shawya, which at the end of summer stretches, bare and brown, to the horizon, save for the little white spots which here and there mark the tombs of holy men, and the white-washed walls of a few farm enclosures.

Before the bombardment Casablanca contained more than 20,000 Moors, about 2000 Jews, and a large European colony. The English, though not so numerous as the Spaniards, were far

more influential. English merchants had made the business life of the town, and still retained a pre-eminent position in it.

From the time of the Carthaginians, the town which is now called Casablanca has been a trading station of some importance; but it was not till twenty or thirty years ago, when English merchants began to establish themselves in it, that it commenced to take the position due to it as the natural outlet for a fertile country reaching from the sea to the Atlas mountains.

The life of the town is centred in the 'stores,' by which is meant the offices and warehouses where European—for the most part English—merchants carry on the bulk of the export and import trade. Casablanca does not look like a place in which to live a strenuous business life, yet the qualifications necessary for a successful merchant are more numerous, and the amount of work required from him is greater, than business in most European towns demands.

To be successful in Casablanca a merchant, besides possessing business capacity, must be a diplomatist, a linguist, and a master of Moorish customs and laws. He must be able to make himself respected by the rough lawless tribesmen, and be always ready to face the financial and other risks of a country which rarely enjoys a year free from drought or locusts or rebellion, and in which misgovernment is the only condition which can be considered permanent.

At the first glance one of the big grain 'stores' on a busy day gives the impression of a simple primitive style of business.

Singly, or in groups, camels, each with four or five hundred-weight of grain in the palmetto sacks which they carry, swing slowly into the open yards, and, at a word from the driver and a tap from his stick at the back of the foreleg, drop on to their knees with a smash which ought to break every bone in the knee joint, and grumble furiously till the loads are rolled from their backs. Before breakfast several hundred camels may have reached one store, and half a dozen loud-voiced measurers, scooping at the grain as hard as they can, seem to make little impression on the little hills of variously coloured grain, through which camels and men have to thread their way.

This buying of grain brought in such profusion into the 'stores' seems a simple enough business, but to secure this supply requires considerable organisation.

Each merchant is at the head of a large number, perhaps fifty

or more, of 'protected' Moors. These men are officially recognised as his agents, and are to some extent secure from the oppression of the Moorish Government. Many of them live in places fifty or a hundred miles distant from the coast, and are often the most influential men in the tribes to which they belong. Trading, sometimes with their own money, sometimes with money or goods supplied by the merchant who 'protects' them, they act as the channels through which produce, often from remote places in the Atlas, is conveyed to the 'store' for which they work, and in return they look to the merchant who employs them for help in all their troubles, legal, political, and financial.

Only a man of considerable personal influence and knowledge of the country can obtain the best men for his agents, and these will only do good work so long as the prestige of their employer, and his power to render them efficient help in their troubles, remain undiminished.

English merchants in Morocco have always shown themselves capable of obtaining and keeping the respect of the natives, and through the lean years which Morocco has lately suffered from, and the unrest which the political movements of France have caused, have succeeded in preserving their hold on their native agents, hoping against hope that a good season would come and they would reap their long-deferred reward.

Throughout the early months of this summer their hopes seemed likely to be fulfilled. The barley crop was a very heavy one, and the rich province of Shawya, which, under a weak sultan, free from taxes and oppression, had become unusually prosperous, poured into Casablanca a wealth of grain which even the capacious 'stores' could hardly contain.

On Tuesday morning, July 30, work both in the town and in the large 'stores' outside the walls, was going on with all the noise and bustle of a good grain year.

For some little time the Moors had been showing signs of excitement. The presence of a French official in the custom house, the newly commenced harbour works, and especially the line of railway which had been made to bring stone for the new breakwaters from a neighbouring quarry, had roused much anti-foreign, or, more strictly speaking, anti-French feeling. The tribes, their secret treasure holes full of the money which the first part of their crops had produced, and two months of idleness in front of them before the rains would make ploughing possible, talked openly of resenting

the innovations of the infidels, and, under the walls, close to the businesslike bustle of the 'stores,' fanatics from time to time preached the 'jehad.'

Precautions of a kind had been taken. Five hundred of the Sultan's troops, unusually well equipped, had been sent down from Tangier, and even though numbers of them, unpaid and uncared for, had deserted and were working on their own account in European 'stores,' even the semblance of a Government force, in a country where the semblance of a thing is nearly as useful as the reality, had done something to preserve law and order.

In the course of the morning a report went through the town that a mounted crier had ridden through the streets calling on all Mohammedans to leave the town to the Christians, and threatening with death all who brought produce into it. The report was well founded, but Europeans were far too busy to bother about it; they had lived too long on the outside of a volcano to be frightened at mere rumblings.

Business went on just as usual both inside and outside the town, and no bargain was less keenly contested, nor was any pile of grain less carefully measured, because the long-threatened 'jehad' might seem to be coming a little closer.

Soon after midday another report spread through the town. 'They are killing the Christians on the iron road.'

It was true; the Moors had at last struck at what seemed to them to be the first step towards foreign domination—the little line of railway leading to the stone quarries—and were killing the workmen engaged on it.

The Europeans in the town did not at once believe the news. Some went to the roofs of houses overlooking the beach on the eastern side of the town, and at once saw enough to confirm the truth of the report. The murderers had not yet finished their work; one poor wretch who had rushed into the sea to escape the mob was seen pursued by a mounted man, and turned back to the beach to be there beaten and hacked to death. When there were no more Christians alive the crowd rushed at the body of one who had been killed on the rocks of a little creek within a hundred yards of the town walls, and spent their rage battering it with sticks and stones.

This outbreak was remarkable in many ways, but especially for the behaviour of the mob, which at the same time that it was displaying the wildest hatred and the most vile cruelty towards

the French, showed an almost judicial anxiety to avoid ill-treating the workmen of other nations.

Others beside Frenchmen were killed ; out of nine workmen killed only three were French, but it seems clear that the others were killed under the impression that they were French.

One of the foremen at the quarries owed his life to being able to explain that he was not French. He was born of Spanish parents in Algeria and spoke French, Spanish and Arabic with equal fluency.

After seeing three of his companions killed he made his escape for the moment by the help of a 'jellabeea' (a Moorish cloak) handed to him by one of his own workmen. He was soon overtaken by mounted Arabs, who asked him if he was a Moor. He admitted that he was not, but at last persuaded them that he was a Spaniard and not a Frenchman. His life was spared, and he was able after a time to make his way back to the town.

When the news of the murders had been confirmed the principal Europeans forced the governor of the town to send out soldiers to bring in the bodies, and these men did their work as though they regretted that they had had no share in the crimes of their co-religionists. The naked mangled bodies, pulled by the feet, the heads dragging through sand and over rock, were brought into an enclosure between the sea wall and the wall of the town, and there left for Europeans to take charge of.

There is no doubt that, till the Moors had had time to reflect on the consequences which might follow, the horrible outrages met with popular approval. Men who had long worked for Europeans, and had seemed to have forgotten the dividing line between infidel and believer, could not hide all sign of triumph, nor prevent an occasional half-questioning, half-jeering, glance at their employers, to see how the infidels would take the murder of their brethren.

Women, too, shared the feeling, and, from the crowds which as time went on gathered on the beach to gloat over the scene of the murders, there rose from time to time the shrill national cry of triumph of the Moorish women, the 'tzgheet,' a sound only heard on great and auspicious occasions. Poor creatures, it was the last occasion that many of them would ever have to use such a cry. A few days later, in the sack of Casablanca, they were suffering at the hands of their country brethren a worse fate than that which had befallen the Christian workmen.

After the last of the Europeans working in the quarries or on the railway line had been killed or had escaped, there was complete

quiet. The governor of the town, who had at least known of the possibility of an outbreak, had done nothing to prevent it, and the European authorities in the town insisted that Muley el Amin, who had been in Shawya for a long time at the head of a small 'mehalla,' keeping up some show of government authority, should be summoned to the town, and become acting-governor. His arrival at the head of about four hundred men was no doubt useful in keeping order in the town, but it is very doubtful if there was ever any likelihood of the townsfolk turning against Europeans as a whole.

Had the mob which committed the murders chosen to carry on their work further, they could have entered the English country houses, which were only a few minutes' walk from the beach, and killed every family inhabiting them before any help could have been sent from the town. Later on in the same day a few soldiers were sent to each of these isolated houses, but no attempt was made on any one of them, and in one an Englishman remained till the day on which the bombardment commenced.

Morocco cannot be judged by the standard of other countries. When the news of the outrages reached Europe it was taken for granted that a general massacre of Europeans in Morocco was imminent. There was apparently every reason for such a fear, but it is not likely that any large body of Moors would have taken part in, or would even have wished for, any such thing. There was a very strong feeling against the French, who were believed to be planning an invasion of the country, and a few fanatics had succeeded in using this feeling to bring about a series of deliberate murders; but the feeling was in a sense more political than religious, and did not extend to an indiscriminate hatred of all foreigners.

However ill-defined was the plan in which the attack on the European workmen seemed the first step, all Moors alike appeared to be agreed as to the object which it was intended to secure. The lawless, insolent tribesmen, who came into Casablanca mounted and armed, the smooth-spoken fanatical town traders, the men working in European stores simply clad in sacks bearing the initials of their employers, all protested that no harm was meant to foreigners as a whole. The French must go, but English, Spanish, and Germans were to be left unmolested, to live and carry on their business as freely as before.

During the days which intervened between the first outbreak

and the bombardment, business inside the town was almost paralysed, and a general exodus of Jews began ; but to some of the 'stores' outside the town grain was brought in in very great quantities, as though the Arabs, conscious that something serious must follow their outrageous act, intended to make as much money as possible while the town still remained open for trade.

The Jews and some Europeans were panic-stricken, but among the chief Europeans the principal fear was that the situation might be wrongly treated by Europe. They felt that, popular as the murderous protest against French influence might be among some of the Moors, there was little likelihood that the mass of the people would wish to follow it up, and were extremely anxious lest an ill-managed attempt to punish the crimes might fan the flicker of fanaticism into a blaze, and lead to the wholesale destruction of innocent people, both Europeans and Moors. This fear was shared by most of the Europeans in Casablanca, and the English colony was not alone in hoping that an English warship would be sent, and would be able, while taking all necessary steps to secure that all those who had countenanced the murders should be adequately punished, to avoid the mistake of taking a disgraceful but local riot for an incipient holy war. There was a very general feeling of disappointment when, on Thursday, August 1, the French cruiser, the 'Galilée,' steamed into the bay.

Since Tuesday the town had been quiet, and Muley el Amin, with his four hundred soldiers, appeared anxious to do his duty, and prevent the possibility of the outrages being repeated. At the sight of a warship the townspeople were very frightened, and certainly had no wish to do anything that might lead to the bombardment of the town.

The captain of the 'Galilée' wished to bombard the town at once—a plan by which the lives of all the Europeans in Casablanca would have been very seriously endangered. The English and German consuls protested by every means in their power against this hasty decision, and at last it was decided that the bombardment should be postponed on condition that the acting-governor, Muley el Amin, carried out certain stipulations. The chief of these were that the country Moors should be expelled from the town, a clear road should be kept between the French consulate and the waterport, and no obstacle should be placed in the way of any European who wished to embark.

The town, like all others on the Moorish coast, had the greatest

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respect for the power of a 'frigate of war,' and Muley el Amin carried out to the best, apparently, of his power what was required of him.

Friday and Saturday passed, and Sunday was nearly over before the report spread that sailors were to be landed on Monday morning. In the course of the night formal notice was sent that 'une force importante' was to be sent ashore, and, soon after sunrise, two boats, carrying a landing party of sixty sailors—the strong force mentioned in the notice—left the 'Galilée.'

That morning an Englishman, living near the waterport, was on the terrace of his house anxiously watching the 'Galilée.' It was a perfect morning, and the town looked very peaceful. There was no business to rouse men early, and if the news of the landing had spread, it had caused no apparent excitement. In the street below some soldiers of Muley el Amin, who had been acting, partly as a guard, partly as useful men-of-all-work in the neighbouring store, were still sleeping on the grass mats, which are all that a Moor requires to turn rough cobble stones into a comfortable bed. They did not dream that the boats now approaching the store were about to cause an explosion that would destroy half Casablanca as effectually as if the town were already mined and the bows of the boats as they touched the shore would complete the circuit and fire the mines.

As the boats reached the shore some Moors came forward, and, as some of the sailors slipped on the smooth wet stones of the landing-place, wished to help them, as though the sailors were some of Casablanca's rare sightseers, welcome and profitable guests.

As soon as the men were all ashore they were formed up by the officer commanding them, and led up the steep causeway which leads to the watergate. As they were approaching it, the Englishman, who was still watching them, saw to his astonishment a soldier, who had for some time been a guard at the Custom House, a quiet steady sort of man, raise his rifle and aim at the point which the sailors had just reached. He seemed in no hurry, aimed steadily and fired. The shot took effect on the officer leading the party, slightly wounding him. It will probably never be known how this shot, so fatal in its consequences, came to be fired. There was no sign of any organised opposition to the French landing, but, the shot once fired, vigorous action on the part of the French was inevitable.

The little body of sailors marched quickly along the road to the

French consulate sweeping the way clear with rifle fire. The first Moor killed dropped where a few minutes before the soldiers had been lying peacefully on their mats, and there the body remained for some days. Only a few straggling shots were fired at the French, and, after the first few yards, the road in front of them was clear save for a few Moors taken by surprise and fleeing for shelter from the bullets. One of the chief English merchants happened to be standing in front of his house as the sailors, firing hard as they went, came round the corner of the street in which he was. He most narrowly escaped into his house, taking in with him two or three Moors who had been standing beside him. Other natives, who were in the middle of the street, were not so fortunate ; they were shot down, and their bodies were left close to the house till the arrival of the main French squadron and the complete occupation of the town.

Before the sailors reached the French consulate, the guns of the 'Galilée' had commenced the bombardment, and the two days' terror had begun.

The Europeans now found themselves in the position in which they had feared they would find themselves from the moment that the suggestion of a bombardment or a landing with insufficient forces had first been made. The town had remained perfectly quiet after the murders, and there was little probability that the Moors, who, with no foreign force to fear, had left Christians unmolested, would, now that the town lay at the power of the cruiser's guns, suddenly change their behaviour. There seemed little risk in putting off all naval or military action till the arrival of adequate forces had made action possible on a scale which would have made any attempt at opposition on the part of the Moors absolutely futile. The landing of a handful of sailors, whatever assurances may have been given by the governor that the landing would be unopposed, was a most risky experiment ; it was a force calculated to excite opposition and not to overawe it.

As soon as the firing began, the lowest of the town Moors took advantage of the confusion and began plundering ; the soldiers, with the choice before them of the chance of being shot either while trying to keep their brethren in order, or while taking part in the plunder, chose the latter, and, the gates being thrown open, the tribesmen, who had long dreamt and spoken of 'el makla' (the food) awaiting them in Casablanca, began to flock into the town, not, primarily, to kill the Christians, but to share in the plunder.

For a time the Europeans, who had, for the most part, taken refuge in the English, French, and Spanish consulates, were left unmolested. These positions commanded to some extent the approaches to the European quarter, and the Moors were at first too busily occupied in looting the defenceless Moorish and Jewish quarters to attempt to penetrate to a part of the town where opposition might be expected.

At 10 A.M. the French cruiser, the 'Du Chayla,' and the Spanish cruiser the 'Don Alvaro de Barzan,' reached the roadstead, and at once proceeded to land as many men as they could spare, bringing up the total force on shore to about 200 men. This force, with the help of some civilians, had to hold the European quarter till the main squadron should arrive against possible attacks from the tribesmen, who, a few days later, were able, in the open country, to fully occupy the attention of 3,000 to 4,000 French soldiers. The Spanish consulate was now strongly garrisoned, and some French sailors were sent to assist in holding the English consulate, which, from its position, would be the first place attacked—when the Moors had exhausted the possibilities of pillage and murder in the Moorish and Jewish quarters, and when the fanatical section among them could rouse their brethren to an organised attack on the European quarter.

Before the bombardment there was a strong though suppressed anti-French feeling both in the town and the country; after it had commenced, all anti-foreign prejudices, all distinction between infidels and believers were for the moment lost sight of, and the Moors were divided into two classes, the plunderers and the plundered.

The fury with which the tribesmen fell on the Jewish quarter and the quarter of their own co-religionists could not have been exceeded even if they had been inspired with the most bitter fanatical hatred. Murder and outrage accompanied every step of the looting, and Moors and Jews alike fleeing from their houses as the tribesmen forced their way in, and finding the French shells dropping on them as they tried to escape to the open country, must have thought that the Christians and the tribesmen had united to destroy the unfortunate townsmen of Casablanca.

Jews and Moors, men, women, and children, were dragged off into the country to be used and often sold as slaves by their captors; as much a part of the loot as the horses, mules, and donkeys which were driven off laden with the property of their late masters.

There is little doubt that the sack of the Moorish and Jewish quarters saved the Europeans. The consulates, which were the refuges for most of the Europeans, were mere dwelling-houses, which, with the exception of the French consulate, surrounded on all sides by houses to which the tribes could have gained entrance, were always at the mercy of a determined and numerous enemy.

Some private houses, close to the consulates and sheltered by their fire, were also held, and in one of them, on the first night of the bombardment, a most unfortunate accident took place.

The house belonged to the English merchant who had so narrowly escaped from the fire of the French sailors when they were making their way to the French consulate, which was not fifty yards distant.

Fifteen sailors were sent to garrison the house, and thirteen of these were placed on a flat part of the roof which overlooked an open space between the walls of the town and a new sea wall, into which the Arabs might have made their way from the open country without passing through any part of the town. This roof did not, when seen from a distance, seem to belong to the house of which it really formed part.

In the course of the night, which was very dark, some of the sailors on the terrace thought they saw Arabs in the enclosure beneath them, and opened fire. A hot fire was at once returned, and in the excitement of the moment no one noticed that the fire did not seem to come from the point where the Arabs were supposed to be attacking. In a few minutes four out of the thirteen men had been hit and were carried into a room which opened on to the roof, where one almost immediately died. A few minutes more at that rate would have left none of the little force untouched. An Englishman, a friend of the owner of the house, was on the roof at the time, and was slightly wounded. He was the first to notice the direction from which the fire that was proving so deadly seemed to come. The sailors were withdrawn into the house, and at once all firing ceased, and there was complete silence. No sign has since been found to indicate that any attack had been made by the Moors, and it seems almost certain that the firing, which answered the first shots from the roof, came from the sailors who were garrisoning the French consulate, to whom, in the darkness, their comrades appeared to be Moors attacking the house which in reality they were defending.

On Tuesday, the English and Spanish consulates came more

under fire. A Moorish house, not far from the English consulate, was occupied by Moors, who chiefly directed their efforts to shooting at anyone attempting to reach the upper terrace whence the small garrison was shooting, and the present state of the wooden staircase which leads to it shows how persistent these efforts were.

In the course of the day some Jews and Jewesses appeared on the roof of a house close to the English consulate, and it was clear that they were taking refuge from Moors who were attempting to force their way into the house through the street door. Part of this door was commanded by a window of the consulate, from which such a heavy fire was kept up that the plunderers had to give up their attempt and retreat, the mounted men among them coming again under fire as they made their way back to safer pillaging ground.

It was clear as the day went on that matters were becoming steadily worse; fresh streams of tribesmen could be seen coming in from the country, and as plunder in the inner part of the town became scanty, the pressure on the European quarter increased.

On Wednesday those in the English consulate who could here and there catch glimpses of the streets in the Moorish quarter saw tribesmen collected in comparatively solid masses, as though at last ready for a united attack on the European quarter. The firing on the consulate became heavier, and the Moors took possession of houses only a very short distance away. The chance of holding out was becoming so doubtful that the destruction of valuables which could not be removed was almost determined upon, when the French squadron arrived. From that moment there was no more question of defence. The tribesmen had wasted their only chances, and had now nothing to expect but punishment for their crimes.

It was but the shell of a town which had been saved. The European quarter alone had escaped. The rest was swept bare. The 'Mallah' (the Jewish quarter) was empty, the crowds which had filled it a few days before had taken refuge in Tangier, had been carried off by the tribes, or were dead. In the Moorish quarter the thousands of little huts were empty except for the pariah dogs and a few helpless old women too old to fly. Of the 20,000 Moors who had been in the town before the bombardment, only 500 were left.

The streets were thickly littered with dead men and women, lying, often naked, among the refuse of the plunder; some of them

killed by shell and rifle fire, but many the victims of the rage for murder and outrage which had suddenly seized the tribesmen. When the fighting was all over, a horrible pile of dead and dying was found almost blocking a gateway between two large open spaces on the west of the town. A crowd, flying out of the town for safety or to bury their plunder, had been met by a rush of Arabs on their way to help in the pillage. Jammed in the gateway and unable to move, they had been struck by the fire from the warships, to which they were completely exposed. About a hundred bodies of men, women, and children were found fixed in one mass with dead horses and loot. On the outside of this horrible mass were some little children, some maimed, others unhurt, saved perhaps by the devotion of parents whose bodies lay below.

The chief business street of the town was completely destroyed, many of the buildings mere blackened walls which threatened to fall at any minute. Scarcely a door in all the town, except in the European quarter, remained unbroken. Many of them had been smashed to pieces, but, as though the pillagers had improved in their work as it advanced, the doors in those parts of the town which were the last to be plundered were not broken down, but a hole had been made in them to admit of a hand being passed through to withdraw the inside bar. The cleanest places were the shops, which had been so completely emptied that they appeared as though swept out and ready for a new tenant. Outside each shop was a mound composed of the contents which had not been worth carrying away. In one place, the horrible stench from the hundreds of dead bodies was overpowered by the mixture of strange smells which came from the wreck of a European medicine shop, in another the litter of letters and bills of exchange from some Jewish business house looked like a broad band of white paint drawn across the blackened road.

When order had been restored, the French sent out carts to carry off the dead for burial. Jews, their mouths covered with cloths soaked in disinfectant, carried out the work, which the ex-governor of the town was compelled to superintend.

Seven hundred bodies were found inside the walls.

When one thinks of the way in which the Moors, a few days later, in the open country, offered themselves again and again as helpless targets for the naval guns, the newest field artillery, and the rifle fire of several thousands of French troops, and remembers

that the same sort of men, in probably equal numbers, were present for more than two days in Casablanca, where there was scarcely a spot which could not be reached without coming under fire, it seems almost incredible that the European quarter escaped unharmed. If fanaticism, instead of hope of plunder, had inspired the Moors, Casablanca would probably have been in the hands of the tribesmen a few hours after the commencement of the bombardment.

After relief had come, people had time to realise how much was gained when the intended bombardment by the 'Galilée' was postponed. In two days most of the plunder of the native and Jewish quarters had been carried off, and the tribesmen were at last preparing to attack the European quarter in earnest. Three hours later the relieving squadron might have been too late to save anything. If the Moors had had the three more days for their work, which, had the 'Galilée' attacked on her arrival they would have had, it is scarcely likely that any part of the European quarter would have escaped.

With as little delay as possible troops were landed. A heavy fire from the naval guns prevented the advance of fresh tribesmen into the town, and greatly disheartened those already there. The troops had little difficulty in sweeping the town free of all opposition, and in driving the Moors into the open country, where they would fight at every disadvantage.

The second period in the history of the Casablanca troubles—the desultory skirmishing which has sometimes been called the siege of Casablanca—is not yet over. The tribes, tired of making futile attacks, and perfectly helpless to oppose the French in the open field, have retired and in some cases made peace, but they have not suffered very heavily, and a peace made at this moment can hardly be lasting. A strong united Morocco would be far less dangerous than Morocco as she is at present, weak and apparently hopelessly divided. There is no one to lead Morocco in war against France, and there is no one who can guarantee the observance of conditions of peace with France.

The most hopeful feature of the outlook in Morocco at present is the heaviness of the early rains which have recently been turning the French camp into a morass. The Moors do not like wasting a good ploughing season.

L. J. BROWN.

DOLLAR NOTES.

AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS—HUSTLING—TAMMANY—CONGRESS
AND COMMONS.

BY HENRY W. LUCY.

ONE of the products of the United States which, as a journalist, naturally attracted my attention during a recent visit, was their newspapers. We in England have diurnal sheets that rank under the generic name. Alike in appearance and contents, they are wide as the Atlantic asunder. I am afraid New York babes and sucklings, nurtured on the 'Herald,' weaned on 'The World,' would turn up their little noses in bored disgust at our staider journals. Some years ago an exceedingly shrewd Londoner conceived the idea of grafting on the mother-tree of English journalism a slip of American growth, selling the result at halfpenny a specimen. It chanced that on the day the first number of the new paper was issued I travelled to town with the editor of one of the oldest, at the time the most prosperous, of metropolitan penny morning journals. He looked over the little sheet with the eye of an expert. 'It will never pay,' he said. 'It can't be done on these lines at this price.'

Well, to-day the halfpenny paper thus summarily dismissed trumpets uncontroverted assertion that its circulation is five times greater than that of any other London morning paper sold at a penny. It is no secret that its profits exceed the dreams of avarice realised by a London brewer in Dr. Johnson's time.

The difference in the point of view of the editor of a leading English paper and that of his American *confrère* is strongly marked. The Englishman lays himself out to provide his readers with substantial fare, something analogous to a round of beef or a saddle of mutton. The American purveying for his customers gives them for daily bread an equivalent to what on bills of fare written in French are called *entrées*, the course immediately succeeded by piquant savouries. Even in these days, when an enterprising outsider going down to the pool of the English journalistic Siloam has effectively troubled its waters, the leading British papers of the old school religiously report parliamentary proceedings, furnish

lengthy law reports, and will sometimes give up a whole page to a tasty police-court case. These undertakings deal, more or less successfully, with matters of fact. If hard fate condemns a New York City editor—and city editor, by the way, means something quite different across the water from its accepted meaning with us—to deal with mere facts, he likes to see them served up with a garnish of fiction.

One day I happened to look in at the office of a great New York morning paper. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and I found the city editor in a state approaching coma. Though worn out he was triumphant. At noon news reached the office that a member of a millionaire family had become engaged to a young lady occupied during the day in dispensing ham and beef to a discriminating throng of customers in a non-fashionable quarter of New York. In his versified account of the foregathering of Werther and Charlotte, Thackeray asks and answers :

Would you know how first he met her?
She was cutting bread and butter.

That is all very well in poetry. Regarded from the point of view of a millionaire meditating matrimony, it is quite a different thing for the damsel to be found intent on cutting ham and beef designed as the basis of a ten-cent sandwich. For the city editor the situation was made more alluring by the fact, much to the fore at the time, that a kinswoman of the millionaire was about to build up at the matrimonial altar the fortunes of an indigent English duke.

Rumour of the engagement over the counter of the ham-and-beef shop, as I have mentioned, found currency at noon. Four hours later the city editor, with pardonable pride, whose expression was checked by international courtesy, handed me a special issue of his paper containing at column's length a minute history of the case, illuminated by portraits of the bridegroom elect, the ham-and-beef girl, her father (in an apron with carving-knife in hand), and the hapless British duke who was soon to be connected with the family by marriage ties. The whole thing turned out to be a hoax. It was a perhaps not altogether vain imagining of an astute tradesman desirous of extending an already prosperous sandwich business. What of that? It made opportunity for successive special editions on a Tuesday. On Wednesday came the contradiction with fresh portraits, and for two following days the paper was filled with thrilling accounts of the adventures of

'our special detective' on the track of the impostor who, frequenting the ham-and-beef shop, had, according to the revised version put forth from that hive of industry, impersonated the millionaire.

This is an episode in the birth and career of the ordinary daily issue of a New York paper. What shall be said for the Sunday paper on sale at break of day in all the great cities of the States ? As Macaulay wrote when he took in hand Dr. Nares's 'Burleigh and his Times,' it filled me with astonishment similar to that which possessed the mind of Captain Lemuel Gulliver when first he landed in Brobdingnag and saw corn as high as the oaks in the New Forest, thimbles as large as buckets, wrens of the bulk of turkeys. Macaulay, by way of conveying impression of the ponderosity of the three volumes, weighed and measured them, and found they contained two thousand closely-printed pages, occupied fifteen hundred inches cubic measure, and weighed sixty pounds avoirdupois. Taking a hint from the petulant reviewer, I weighed and measured the ninety-six huge pages of my Sunday paper. It held down one scale with a pound and a quarter avoirdupois weight in the other. Spread out, its sheets would make a track down Fleet Street forty-eight yards long by three-quarters of a yard wide. Full of interesting matter, every page a picture-gallery, how welcome it would have been in the household of Noah during the dull days and long evenings of their cruise in the Ark !

Wandering about the streets of New York and Boston, I was struck by the purposeful pushfulness of the teeming throng. While still a small boy, Benjamin Franklin, resenting waste of time involved in the paternal pious habit of invoking divine blessing every morning over the breakfast delicacies, startled his father by suggesting that it would save time to 'say grace once for all over the whole barrel of red herrings.' This business-like proposal, casually passed over the breakfast-table, strikes a leading note in the character of Benjamin Franklin's countrymen to-day. Whatever he is doing, whithersoever he is going, he, to quote the vernacular, wants to get there right away, by the shortest route, with the least possible expenditure of time. A natural consequence of this determination to reach a particular goal whosoever may be in the way is a certain brusqueness of speech and manner. In social intercourse the bearing of an American towards guests, especially those from across the sea, is even warmer in its kindness,

more unwearying in its consideration, than is customary in England. But in the streets, at railway stations, and in the domestic service of hotels there is an off-hand manner that startles the timid Britisher.

I heard a story, not absolutely apocryphal, of an Englishman who had landed in New York on a Saturday bursting into the room of an hotel companion on Sunday morning with inquiry whether there was a homeward-bound steamer sailing next day. Battered, brow-beaten, bewildered, he had in eight hours seen enough of New York. What had happened was that, being an amiable creature of gossiping tendency, accustomed to the leisurely consideration of friends and neighbours in a country town, he had gone about the streets asking busy people all kinds of irrelevant questions. By comparison with the New Yorker on business bent stopped by a stranger with fumbling inquiry the Wedding Guest buttonholed by the Ancient Mariner was a tractable person. What with policemen struggling with traffic in Broadway; what with stopping the wrong surface car, confidently getting in, and on discovering that it was going down town, he wanting to go up, insisting upon getting out; what with blocking the stairway of the elevated railroad, and when he was half-way up insisting upon turning back and stemming the turbulent tide of home-seekers, the idea having struck him that this wasn't the line he sought—the hapless man concluded he had seen enough of New York, and yearned for the peace and comfort of home.

At the time of my visit New York was on the eve of one of the most momentous struggles in its modern history. Two years earlier the outraged citizens, long prostrate under the heel of Tammany, rose in righteous wrath and dislodged the tyrant. A new class of men of a character unknown in office as far as memory of the present generation ran, were substituted. They devoted themselves with conspicuous success to the task of clearing out the Augean stable of corruption. It was fondly thought that, after this utter rout, and the forced retirement of some of Tammany's favourite sons into the seclusion of the State prison, nothing more would be heard of that singular organisation. But Tammany had its roots deeply set in a stratum of human cupidity. In the palmy days of Boss Tweed every man who wanted money and was indisposed to earn it by honest labour looked to Tammany to supply it. The fundamental principle of the brotherhood enriched the

American language with a new word. It is spelled 'graft.' No one can trace its derivation or its authorship. Its meaning is, however, incontestably clear. It describes money, more or less secretly, always feloniously, transferred from public revenues to private pouches.

Old retainers having suffered the bitter experience of two years' deprivation of a regularised supply of 'graft,' Tammany was, with their assistance, making a desperate effort to recapture the citadel of local government. At the approach of the election of mayor and other civil officers controlling revenues amounting to thirteen million sterling a year, the discharge of their duties affecting the health, comfort, and prosperity of three and a half millions of people, Tammany,

Like a tall bully
Lifted its head and

clutched at power. The fight was essentially a matter of dollars. To bring back the good old times when Boss Tweed, and, later, Mr. Croker, unloosed the purse-strings, was a consummation worth staking money on. Tammany's coffers were, accordingly, overflowing.

There is nothing sentimental about Tammany's dealing with current problems. It is essentially a business corporation. Every man who hoped to share the spoil was required to subscribe to the war-chest in proportion to his expectations. It was reported that a certain body of contractors who found the strict supervision of the retiring civic government embarrassing, planked down £10,000 to turn them out. This was supplemented by a similar sum levied upon another contractor, who thought it a reasonable price to pay for the return to power of more generous patrons. A polluted cave of Adullam, everyone that was in financial distress, everyone that was in debt, everyone that was discontented, and all who objected to the inquisitiveness of civic law as administered by the outgoing council, rallied round Tammany. With cash if they had it, with personal service if they were penniless, they fought for their ancient benefactor.

On the other side were ranged the decent citizens who formed themselves into ward associations, and laboured day and night to deliver the city from the threatened curse. Women figured largely under this flag, subscribing to the campaign fund and canvassing for the anti-Tammany candidates. Nominally Tammany is, in

politics, counted for the Democrats. It was founded with the mission of directing the affairs of the Democratic party, as, once upon a time, the Birmingham Caucus proposed to rule the Liberal host. The gravity of the situation was testified to by the fact that the better class of Democrats, sinking political differences, made common cause with the Republicans in the effort to prevent the resurrection of Tammany.

Pending the election, New York was in a condition of seething excitement. Multitudinous meetings were held every night, not only in public buildings, but in the open thoroughfares. I drove on a motor-car over an area of the city covering its most populous tracks. The crowded streets buzzed with excitement. Americans enter upon an electoral contest with even exaggeration of that thoroughness and attention to details that mark their ordinary business transactions. One device, unknown in English municipal or parliamentary contests, is the display of huge white sheets spread on the footpath. On these, through the agency of gigantic magic-lanterns, reflections on the personal character of opposing candidates are literally cast. Another expedient, much in favour with Tammany, is the equipment of greengrocers' carts and the like as peripatetic platforms. These are crowded with men, including a fair sprinkling of boys, who hold forth at street corners.

The cosmopolitan character of the constituency was illustrated by the fact that in one street I heard a man shouting in German, while a little further on a blear-eyed boy addressed his fellow-countrymen in what, I was told, was the Yiddish tongue. On neither side did the candidates spare themselves. Motor-cars filled an important part in the armament of the campaign. Rival candidates flashed by each other, going east or west to keep appointments at distant public halls. If *en route* they happened upon a moderate-sized crowd, they pulled up and improved the occasion. On the whole, though language was not restrained, the proceedings were orderly.

The pulpit joined the platform in the fray. On the Sunday preceding the poll the election was the topic in many churches. Looking in at Madison Square Presbyterian Church, drawn by the fame of a popular preacher, I was privileged to make a note of the following breezy passage delivered from the pulpit by the esteemed pastor: 'Considered as an institution, Tammany, capitalising itself by thrift, fortifying itself by perjury, wallowing in uncleanness, maintaining a propaganda of lust, growing fat on the debauched

innocence of women, is the devil's own, morally fragrant with the mephitic odours of his sulphurous kingdom.' In due time the congregation, who were evidently not in the pay of Tammany, dispersed, with the pleased consciousness that they had assisted at an uplifting discourse.

■ Analogous things were said with circumstance about individuals in the hostile camp, till the stranger wondered whether the law of libel is operative in the United States. At a public meeting the Mayor of New York, round whose chair the battle raged, talking about the distribution of patronage by Tammany, stated that a man appointed at a fat salary as inspector of sewers was blind. Tammany's response was apt and cynical. The nominee, it was pointed out, could use his nose, which, in the particular business committed to his charge, would be quite as useful as eyes.

To one familiar with election riots in England, not to mention Ireland, it seems inevitable that angry passions running thus high must lead to outbreaks of public disorder. Nothing serious in that way happened. I suppose those directly concerned have grown accustomed to this kind of verbal assault, content to repay in kind. During the closing days of the contest I happened to be the guest of one of America's most famous public speakers, a man who played on the passion or the humour of a crowded audience with the deftness and certainty of a great musician seated in the organ loft. On the breakfast-table, among piles of morning papers, were those of the side opposite to that championed by my host. Looking through them I found him accused of almost every crime short of murder, and, at least on one occasion, that was hinted at. My impulse was to secrete the journals lest he should suffer pain. He glanced over them with a smile in which there was more of amusement than contempt.

To describe in detail how a public man has, through devious courses, dipped his hand into the civic purse, is in New York during the week of contest for civic supremacy merely a *façon de parler*. To call a fellow-citizen a perjurer and a thief is but a form of American humour. No one seemed a penny the worse, nor did the person attacked take any pains to correct possible misapprehension. He was content with the retort, 'You're another,' pleased if he could sharpen its blunted edge by advancing an even graver counter-charge.

After all, Tammany won, sweeping the polls with a majority of 70,000 votes. This crushing victory was all the more striking

since, with one insignificant exception, the whole press of New York were united against the gang. Morning after morning millions of readers had held up before them the iniquity of Tammany, its shameful history through half a century, and the duty of every decent citizen to sit on its tombstone and prevent its resurrection.

The name of Tammany is familiar throughout Great Britain. But for most of us, its birth, like that of Jeames, is 'wropt in mystery.' By diligent inquiry I discovered that when the Pilgrim Fathers landed on the other side they found in possession of the Delaware Indians some desirable land. William Penn bought it from a chief whom the tribe revered by the name of Tammany, which being translated means 'The Affable.' More than a century ago a political organisation founded in New York made the Delaware's name its own. To this day Tammany observes some of the aboriginal ritual and boasts a governing council of Sachems. Their proceedings are secret, but their influence, subtly spread, has at successive epochs been autocratic. It operates through a highly organised system of local clubs and district associations. By these means, under Tweed's direction, it obtained possession of every important office, every avenue of public employment, in the city of New York.

As one long accustomed to procedure in the House of Commons, what struck me chiefly as a spectator of the opening of a Session of Congress at Washington was its note of simple, severe business intention. The inauguration of a Session in the House of Commons, more especially when its first action is the election of a Speaker, is marked by a ceremony whose formulæ go back to Stuart times. If the candidate for the Chair be not opposed, and he rarely is, his election is moved from the Ministerial side by a private member of high personal standing, the resolution being seconded by a member of the Opposition of equal repute. Stately speeches are made, extolling the virtues and capacity of the candidate. The election carried, whether by unanimous vote or after a division, the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition make further high-toned speeches, the latter, though defeated, rivalling the spokesman of the Ministerialists in his courtesy and submission to the new Speaker.

As between Congress and the House of Commons during the process of electing a Speaker, there is one thing in common. During the temporary non-existence of a presiding official the Clerk of

the House directs preliminary affairs. But, while the Clerk of Commons is not permitted to open his mouth, dumbly indicating by outstretched hand the members designated to move and second the resolution nominating the Speaker, the Clerk in Congress is even voluble in his remarks.

The names of two candidates being submitted, a division followed, the procedure at Washington differing wholly from that at Westminster. The Clerk read out the names of members inscribed on the roll of Congress, and each responded with a cry of the name of the man he delighted to honour. Another clerk seated at the table ticked off the vote. The separate columns added up gave a majority of thirty-two in a House of 364 members. In the House of Commons this would be reckoned a moderately small muster. But the division occupied twenty minutes, a point of time that compares unfavourably with practice at Westminster, especially since Mr. Lulu Harcourt's reform came into operation.

Thus elected, the Speaker was brought in, escorted by the oldest member of Congress, on whose arm he leaned. He took his seat in the uncanopied Chair with as little ceremony as if the action were preliminary to having luncheon spread on the table before him. Not for him the butterfly state of the Speaker of the House of Commons, arrayed in black silk gown and full-bottomed wig, silken stockings shining over shapely calves below knee-breeches, with silver buckles set on Oxford shoes. The suit the Speaker donned when yesterday he went about his business as a private citizen he wore in the Chair when presiding over business in Congress, and, subject to careful brushing, will wear it every day he is called upon to perform his lofty duties.

To one who has lived in the House of Commons more than thirty years, has known and reverenced three of our greatest Speakers, there was something furtively pleasing in hearing the Speaker of the fifty-eighth Congress of the United States invariably alluded to in conversation as 'Uncle Joe.' The well-conditioned mind shrinks from the thought of allusion to Mr. Speaker Peel during his term of office as 'Uncle Fred,' to Mr. Gully as 'Uncle Bill,' or to the present occupant of the Chair as 'Uncle Jim.' In Washington, alike in conversation and newspaper gossip, Mr. Cannon, member for Illinois, was ever 'Uncle Joe,' and no change in the friendly custom was made because he had grown to the dignity of the Speakership.

Having been sworn in, Uncle Joe took to the Chair as a duck takes to water. At the outset he had a little difficulty with his spectacles. An old parliamentary hand, accustomed to display the fluency of speech which comes to Americans by nature, the occasion was one on which he felt it more proper to commit the expression of his thoughts to paper. As a preliminary to reading, he fixed on his nose a pair of glasses that had long seen service while he was still a private member. But they would not work. After a moment's struggle, watched with keen interest by the crowded House, he dived into the recesses of his breast-pocket and fished forth another pair. These apparently bore the Speaker's mark. Anyhow, they served. In a voice a trifle tremulous, he read a dignified speech, as warmly applauded on the Democratic benches as it was by the Republican majority. Having finished his reading, the Speaker in quite another tone, reminiscent of the New York surface car man's 'Step lively!' said: 'I am ready to take the oath of office.'

Here, again, broad difference was marked between procedure in the two legislative chambers. The swearing-in of a new House of Commons occupies nearly a week of the Session. Rows of tables are set out on the floor; three or four members grasp a copy of the Bible; others struggle for place at the table; the Clerk reads the prescribed oath; members kiss the Book; and thus groups of ten or fifteen are worked off with more or less despatch. In Congress swearing in is a simpler and, I am bound to say, a more decently accomplished performance. As in the Commons, the Speaker is first sworn in. Uncle Joe, rising from his chair, uplifted his right hand while the oldest member, standing well out on the carpeted space before him, recited the terms of the oath. There was no repetition of the words, no kissing of a book. The uplifted hand signified acquiescence. The Speaker sworn in, the roll of Congress was again called over. As many as could gather in the space before the Chair mustered there, stood with hands uplifted while the oath was read, and disappeared to make room for another batch. It was all over in half an hour, and the business of the Session already in progress.

The voting in the case of the election of the Speaker is known as vote by roll. There is another process, being vote by counting heads. To a stranger the former was wearisome; the latter was slovenly, inviting error. There is no walking through division lobbies with elaborate preparation for ticking off the names of

members as they pass through a wicket. In Congress the Speaker does the counting. To see Uncle Joe standing by his chair determinedly clutching by the head the hammer with which he calls for order, while he points the handle individually at some three hundred and fifty fathers of families, is fatally suggestive of the sufferer from insomnia who from his sleepless pillow tries to count how many supposititious sheep are passing through an imaginary field gate. Obviously, on a close division upon a possibly critical issue, such a method of counting votes is dangerously lax.

Looking down from the Diplomatic Gallery on the crowded benches, and comparing the bustling scene with the more familiar one at Westminster, I noticed a marked difference in the general aspect. The average age of Congress men is considerably less than that of members of the House of Commons, lowered though it was by the influx of new members consequent on the General Election of 1905. With us parliamentary life is, in the main, the goal of long labour in the commercial and professional mart. We have a sprinkling of dukes' sons and the like who enter the House because their fathers were there before them, and it is still the proper thing to do. But the majority is composed of men who have spent their best years in other fields of labour. Having made their mark and their fortune, they feel they can afford to add to their affluence the stamp of M.P., which, socially and otherwise, is of substantial value. Congress men mustered at Washington gave a foreign observer the impression that they were fully engaged in business outside the Capitol, and had 'taken on' Congress as a sort of relaxation from the daily round of private affairs.

A CYCLE OF CATHAY.

His laurels are green when his hairs are gray,
And it's oh ! for the life of a soldier.

In these wearing days of Socialists and riotous Bengalees we are apt to forget that many of those who took part in person in the Empire-making, and what we are pleased to consider as ancient history, are still living, and living perhaps in no small wonder. In the quiet residential parts of England, usually on the south coast—for the south coast is often kindlier to age than most of England—many an old soldier or sailor or public servant suns out his old age. Not only men of the Baltic, and the Crimea, and of the Mutiny, but here and there a survivor of the old Cabul war, when our young Queen had just come to the throne, some relic of the 'Illustrious Garrison'—i.e. of Jellalabad—or of General William Nott's stout garrison of Candahar ; or else someone who had ridden with the 14th Light Dragoons at Ramnagar in the last Sikh war, or who, in the Sutlej campaign that foreran it three years earlier, had seen that night of weariness, and horror, and confusion after Ferozeshuhr, when no man knew who his neighbour was, and the Sikh guns fired point blank the night through ; or, again, men who had seen the last of many wars with the Mahrattas, and the twin surprise battles of Mahrajpore and Punniar.

If you look into one of the clubs under the lee of Beachy Head or the Hastings cliffs you will find there men talking of wars and army reform schemes that took place before any soldier now serving was born. This perhaps Sir Evelyn Wood has realised, for even his marvellous memory may have failed at times, and from some retreat has come a letter to say : ' You are mistaken, sir. When Nicholson was wounded it was not so-and-so who led the Fusiliers, for he was hit at the corner of the Chandi Chouk, but I, who was then senior subaltern of the Grenadier company.' And so on, till one can realise that it is easier to write of the battle of Hastings, when none can say one nay, than to tell of events that living men remember.

We, in this year of grace, the fiftieth after the great Indian Mutiny, or the Sepoy revolt, or whatever we please to call it, look

upon the veterans of that time of stress as almost the last thing in ancient history, and they and their doings and reminiscences are of intense interest to us. We realise the stress of it all, and the edifice that tottered, as we read 'The Galley Slave,' that allegorical poem of Rudyard Kipling's.

Oh, gallant was our galley from her carven steering wheel
To her figurehead of silver and her beak of hammered steel.

Was it storm? our fathers faced it and a wilder never blew,
Earth that waited for the wreckage watched the galley struggle through.

Under the lee of that same Beachy Head there lives to this day, hale and hearty and active, General Robert Napier Raikes, who had twenty-eight years' service when the Mutiny took place, and who entered the Company's service when George IV. was King, in the year 1829. Let us try to imagine it. An officer in the army in India in the days of the First Gentleman in England! An officer who joined the army when men were still actively talking of the doings of Malcolm, and Doveton, and Hislop, and the Marquess Hastings and the 'Grand Army,' and of Mehidpur and the taking of Aseergarh, and such-like victories!

Robert Napier Raikes, after being at Addiscombe, was appointed to the Bengal Native Infantry in 1829, he then being sixteen years of age. He was the grandson of the famous Robert Raikes of Gloucester, of Sunday School fame. Military fate took him through much of the career open to keen regimental officers, who cared to mingle sport with their every-day life. In 1839, with ten years' service, at the time when Sir John Keane was entering Ghuzni, he was appointed adjutant of the smartest regiment of the famous Gwalior contingent, the Grenadiers, whose immense men and smart drill had made them famous in the Bengal army. A fine horseman, and devoted to horses, he soon changed that position for that of adjutant of the 1st Gwalior Cavalry—a Silardar corps. With this regiment he took part in the Gwalior campaign of 1843, and was present at the battle of Punniar, for which he wears the six-pointed bronze star, with Lord Ellenborough's famous rainbow ribbon. How or what the Gwalior campaign was, few folk now remember or care to ask. Gwalior is the capital of the kingdom of Scindiah, one of the five chiefs of the Mahratta confederacy. The Mahratta campaigns of 1803 and 1817 had settled for the time being whether British or Mahratta power was to be paramount in Hindustan; but Scindiah had been left

in possession of his State, or the main portion of it, and his rock fortress of Gwalior had been restored to him. Three times have the British held this, and restored it to the ruling family as a pledge of their belief in its loyalty. Up the long steps to the summit of the immense table rock and through the spiked gates Lieutenant Raikes had led a troop of the 1st Cavalry, the British subaltern, as ever, doing some skylarking feat in his lighter moments. Ever since the days of the great Marquis Wellesley the Hindu powers had watched the yearly increasing might of the British, and envied the hold that good government was giving them on the hearts of the people. Ranjeet Singh, the ruler of the Panjab, and Scindiah had long held earnest communication in the matter, and at the close of the 1804 campaign it was General Lake himself who had chased with his cavalry corps the Sikh invaders north of the Sutlej. The Sikhs had thought better of it, and wily old Ranjeet Singh had made the tripartite treaty with us to put Shah Shujah on the throne of Kabul, from which his nobles had driven him. Possibly the astute Sikh had expected that we should come to even more grief than actually accrued, though Heaven knows that was enough and to spare, and the evil remains to this day. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that in 1843 there was much trouble in Gwalior, and much talk of intrigue with the Sikhs, and of a Sikh invasion, which did not actually occur till two years later. There was also trouble in Gwalior itself with a young prince in the hands of intriguing factions, headed by Mahratta ministers, who, to the amusement of the British troops, held respectively the titles of the 'Dada' and the 'Mama.' To be ready for eventualities the Viceroy had assembled a number of troops at Agra, ostensibly for a camp of exercise. The trouble came with an outbreak of the Gwalior State troops, quite distinct from the Gwalior treaty-kept contingent at Sipri. The Gwalior troops were the descendants of the huge French-trained army that the Savoyard De Boigne had made for Mahdojee Rao Scindiah. The name of De Boigne is familiar just now, from the memoirs of his widow, the Countess De Boigne, which have lately been published.

The Gwalior army still had French adventurers connected with it, and its drill was in French. It is interesting to see how hard the French legend died in India. Long after the last trace of French rule and the last French soldier had left India, or rather all India save the tiny spots that still belong to France, French officers and their descendants remained, training the armies of

the great native States. So hard did the French drill die that to this day there are officers serving the Maharajah of Kashmir who remember the French drill that was handed down to them when they joined.

It was this army that broke loose in 1843, and against which the British force at Agra moved under Sir Hugh Gough, the Commander-in-Chief in India. With him marched Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General, and so little was serious war expected that some ladies of the Commander-in-Chief's party rode at the head of the troops on elephants. It was not till a round shot whistled overhead that the absent-minded British realised that the whole Mahratta army was in front of them, and very much meant business. Then followed a rough-and-tumble bayonet battle in the good old 'Paddy' Gough style, that carried red fear of the British infantry through the length and breadth of the land. And while Sir Hugh Gough's force fought out the unexpected battle at Maharajpur, which did not end till the gunners of the Mahratta force had been bayoneted at their guns, a division from the south, which included the Gwalior contingent, fought the battle of Punniar, at which, as has been said, Lieutenant—he was still a lieutenant—Robert N. Raikes was present. Previous to this his active service had consisted of nothing more serious than bush-whacking for rebels and dacoits in Bundelkand, with a good share of his favourite sport of tiger shooting, then far easier to obtain than in these hard days.

The next campaign was eight years later, when Captain Raikes went to the war in Burma, in 1851, being present with his regular regiment, the 67th Bengal Infantry, at the taking of Rangoon, under Sir John Cheape, and was then appointed to command the Arracan battalion. He was soon back with the Gwalior contingent, however, when the War in Burma was over, and the Mutiny found him in command of the 1st Gwalior Cavalry. It was in this Burma war, by the by, when Raikes had twenty-two years' service, that Lord Wolseley saw his first campaign as a young officer. When the Mutiny broke out Raikes was at Goonah with a detachment of his regiment, and was engaged in trying to keep the country quiet. Finally, after conveying various convoys of treasure to safety, he marched with his men from Mynpoorie to Agra. A few miles out of the capital the crisis came, but a kindlier end than was the lot of many. The regiment drew up by the roadside and refused to come any further, and Major Raikes rode in alone, a loaded

'Joe Manton' in his hand, accompanied almost to the gates by a native officer and three men, not without some qualms that a bullet through the back might speed him, as it had done many. But the dissolution was a friendly one, as it was in many cases illustrating the kindly feelings between officers and men which the rancour of rebellion and calumny had not effaced. To this date the variety in the forms of mutiny of that great army which in three short months wiped out a glorious past is a matter of wonder. How many wanted to mutiny? Was it the result of agitation and fear and the belief in massacres that the British were to effect on the natives? Was it pure racial rancour, and the accumulation of years of hate? Was it political sedition pure and simple? No man knows, still less the rank and file of the mutineers. Was it, as an old mutineer, who had seen the quarrels and the squalor of the puppet Mogul court within the walls of rebel Delhi, said to the writer . . . 'A wind blew and we ran before it'? Certainly the ferocity of the outbreak varied to an extraordinary degree, and no key has ever been found to solve the mystery.

At Agra Major Raikes found his wife and children, who after many adventures had escaped in a bullock cart from Gwalior. He himself was made field engineer of the Agra force, and when the country opened out he was appointed Remount Agent, for which his knowledge of horses well fitted him. It was not his fortune to join any of the larger forces that were trampling out the Mutiny, and in 1865 he came home to England for the first time for thirty-five years. Thirty-five years of robust health in the days when men went little to the Himalayas, but shot tigers and played racquets through the hot weather, are no mean certificate to the Indian climate. In the reformation and reconstruction of the Indian Army many officers, especially the senior ones, could not be employed, for the army was smaller and the number of officers with each corps fewer, so on his return from leave, with close on forty years' service, there was little but general duty to be done, and he finally left the country in 1869.

So ended the long regimental career that included three campaigns and earned three medals, of which the Mutiny one was the last. And yet the General is still hale and hearty. It can hardly be realised that it is to-day possible to talk with an officer of the Indian Army who had served as an officer in India when George IV. was king, and who had known the old army of India in all its early glory; who was serving with his regiment in the Indian canton-

ment that Lord Roberts was born in, at the time of his birth ; who was an officer of twenty-two years' service in the same campaign as Lord Wolseley first smelt powder in, and who had known the famous Begum Somru, and had often been out to her parties at Sardhana. The Begum Somru was a famous personage during many years of our rule in India. Her name is due to the nickname of her French sailor husband, one Walter Reinhart, known as Sombre, an adventurer of the worst type. Of her many famous stories remain, of her intrigues with the stout English free-lance, George Thomas of Hansi, of her meeting with Lord Lake in Durbar after the battle of Delhi in 1803, when his Lordship, having lunched well, kissed her in full Durbar, to the scandal of all beholders and the high amusement of the younger British officers. Or the tale of the refractory serving maid, whom the old lady buried alive, and then had her tent pitched and her bed made over the spot, that she might in contemplation enjoy her vengeance to the full ; or how her soldiery, being in arrears of pay, sat her on a bronze gun, red hot in the noonday sun, till she paid them. Then as marvellous as any is the fact of an officer still living who had often seen the old lady. The litigation over her will, and the Dyce-Sombre law suits, were at one time *causes célèbres*.

With General Raikes at Eastbourne lives his wife, who will tell you of her escape from Gwalior, and the live horror it all still seems to her, and how Indian life was never the same to that generation.

In Eastbourne also lives another lady, whose memories take one far back to the history of the East. Mrs. Carew is a daughter of the famous Sir John Hearsey, who commanded the Barrackpur division of the Bengal Army at the time of the Mutiny, and who, it will be remembered, was riding by at the moment when Sepoy Mangal Panday, some weeks before the outbreak of the Mutiny, having cut down the adjutant and the European sergeant-major of his regiment, the 19th Native Infantry, at evening parade, was walking up and down calling on the men of the quarter guard to join him. The old General, who was long regarded as a man of immense influence with the Native Army, and who had been known in his young days, with the 'Grand Army' of the Marquess Hastings, as the 'Hero of Seatabuldi,' rode up with his sons and his daughter, the lady in question. Without a moment's hesitation he drew his sword, said 'damn his musket,' when they warned him it was loaded, and, followed by his sons, rode at the mutineer, who then shot himself with his musket. Severe measures were afterwards

taken with the commander of the guard. Mrs. Carew, in addition to being present at this dramatic scene, that broke so suddenly on a quiet evening's ride, had arrived from England only a few months before with her father, who came to take up the command of the Sialkot brigade, to which he had been posted and from which he had almost immediately been promoted to the Barrackpur Division. This had entailed a long journey down country by *dak* and *budgerow*, at a time when gossip and rumours of all sorts were rife. *En route* General and Miss Hearsey had stayed a month at Cawnpore with their old friends the Wheelers, during which time, as guests of the General commanding the division, they naturally met most of the members of that ill-fated station. This was but a short month before the outbreak. The Hearseys had long been a well-known family of Anglo-Indian soldiers, but old Sir John, who was afterwards Honorary Colonel of the 21st Hussars, the 3rd Company's European Cavalry, was by far the most distinguished, and a very tall, handsome man. Coming across France *en route* to Sialkot, Sir John and his daughter had stopped in Paris, at a time when rejoicings and *fêtes* at the close of the Crimean War were in progress. They were too late in arriving to get tickets for the State functions, and the British Ambassador had suggested that if the General wore his uniform he would need no tickets. So next day he wended his way in uniform, and way was made everywhere for *le beau général Anglais*, as the crowd at once dubbed him. Mrs. Carew by her mother's side is descended from the celebrated Hyder Hearsey, the free-lance, him of the Pachesi board story, who, like Perron and De Boigne, had preferred a life of adventure in the independent native States to service with the British. Indeed are the old streets of the South coast towns full of the remnants of the romance of the British Empire.

But it is not in England alone that the old servants of England in India and their descendants are to be found. That was clear enough to those who saw the sad but triumphant entry of the veterans of both races into the Coronation arena at Delhi. Half the villages of the north contain men who talk of Nicholson and the three Chamberlains, and to whom Jan Laarence is still a name to conjure by. In the Derajat, by the great Indus, perhaps, of all the districts that have poured good soldiers to the English army, are more sturdy veterans to be found than in any other. Five thousand Pathan and Biloche horsemen, from our own side of the border, marched out of the Derajat on their own horses to help quell the Poorbeah rising. This

was Herbert Edwardes' district, and Nicholson's, and it was from here that the former raised his tribal force that kept the Sikh army East of the Indus, and fought alone two pitched battles with the highly organised Sikh armies of Moolraj. Then the subaltern and his large brigade marched to help lay siege to Mooltan through the hot weather that preceded the final part of the second Sikh war. The intense belief in the prowess of the British, and the commanding personality of the British subaltern Herbert Edwardes, is one of the many marvels of our sub-history that people might do well to remember. Their faith was not in vain, and as a reward for thrice faithful service, titles and fat lands were bestowed on the leaders, for which they and their people have paid again and again by faithful service. The 15th Indian Cavalry (Cureton's Mooltanis), the 1st Punjab Cavalry, and the regiments of the Scinde Horse all draw largely from the gentry and yeomanry of the Derajat. A year or so ago, Lord Kitchener visited the province, and gave special audience to the pensioned native officers of the province, and they came, two and three generations, the titled father, the pensioned son, and his son now serving, all in the uniforms of the same regiment, for it's father to son, and father to son again, among the old families of the Afghan clans royal, that inhabit the Dersajat. Here and there an old man will still talk of Herbert Edwardes, not of his own accord, but pushed forward by sons and grandsons. Others, though a dwindling band, will talk of their youth and the doings at the 'Bailey Guard,' as the natives always call Lucknow in its defence and relief, and how the hand kept the head, in those days of expert swordsmen, before the rifle made war a stalking match, or rather what passes for war on the Afghan border. And since Lord Kitchener knows a man when he sees one, many of these old soldiers went home the happier for an appreciative word from the Indian war-lord, to whom they had in fealty presented the hilts of their damascened swords. It is good to keep the memory of the old men, and the old time afore, for here and there a few links will take us back several generations and bring ancient history close to our own times. It is only a very few years ago that an old lady died whose husband had been a boy in the 'forty-five.' She had, it is true, married him when a girl, and he was in his eighties, but the short circuit remains. In the seventies again an old Scotch lady died who had often heard her mother speak of being taken as a child to see the last witch burned in Scotland. In a like manner General Raikes must have met men in India who remembered the battle of Plassey, and of Warren Hastings's flight from Benares, the origin of the 'Ghore par

howdah, hathi par zin' doggerel (howdah on horse and saddle on elephant, a sign of somewhat hurried flight). He could easily have heard his grandfather speak of knowing a man who had seen King Charles ride through London to enjoy his own again.

To hear the old men talk, is to realise that one age is not after all so unlike another, and that what men did and said in the Peninsula is very much the same that they did in South Africa, and that the things that have been are the things that shall be. We may then perhaps realise that poor old Bangs, who can only just crawl round the billiard table at 16 St. James', was once that young devil Bangs of the Light Dragoons, and the best cross country rider and merriest dancer in all Hindustan, or England either for that matter, and likes to be treated as such, and not as if he and everyone else knew that his day was drawing to even-song.

G. F. MACMUNN.

AN AFRICAN ANDROMEDA.

ONE man in his time plays many parts, nor need he wait to pass through the seven ages to do so. If he enters his Majesty's Colonial Service he will quickly find that 'exigencies of the service' cover many an extraordinary experience, many a difficult position in which he will have to stand alone, and a curious feature of this is that a man invariably takes such adventures as a matter of course, and adapts himself to his several *rôles* with an ease little short of marvellous, and without any distinct impression that anything out of the way is happening. Such is the influence of atmosphere. What could be more disconcerting to a man who has never before left England than to find a puff-adder stretched out in his verandah, or to see his dinner laid out on a bare table, and on inquiry to find his servant had borrowed his tablecloth for a pall for his brother's coffin ? Yet at the time such things are nothing more than annoying.

How, again, should a newly arrived legal mind advise a man in genuine distress who complains that, through the unfortunate position of a Government lamp-post, his father's ghost is afraid to enter the house, and has to stay out in the cold ? He may solve the problem by driving the man away with objurgations or by sympathising with him and shifting the lamp-post, according as he is in sympathy or not with the native mind, but he will not be surprised or think such matters out of the way. They are part of the custom of the country, part of the atmosphere that surrounds him. In a few weeks a man can get used to anything.

And thus accommodated to his environment the new District Commissioner of the Anum District, Gold Coast Colony, hands in pocket, whistled cheerily as in solitary state he stared from his little verandah past the tall bamboo-pole from which hung a tattered Union Jack, down the mountain-side far below, and saw the hammock of the sick man whom he had just despatched home, emerge from the canoe and crawl, looking like a little black domino, into the forest. Then, when the last carrier had passed from view, and he saw the canoes returning, he turned away.

He heard the splashing of the water being poured into his travelling bath and the cheerful jingle of knives and forks as his native boy laid the breakfast-table. Though the rainy season was fast approaching, the day was fair and sunny, sounds of distant laughter rose from the village below him ; he felt impelled to sing.

But after breakfast, when the last ash in his pipe had died out, his mood changed. The sky grew overcast, the great mists began to rise, swirling and eddying, blotting out the mountains and river. With somewhat of a shock he realised that he who, a short six weeks before, was growling, a young pedantic barrister, in his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, was at the present moment alone in a fever-poisoned country face to face with twelve months of solitude, with the nearest white man fifty miles, or, as distance is relative, three days and two nights' long travel distant. Beyond reach of advice in emergency or help in case of sickness, with only a native sergeant and a few black police, he controlled a people of whose habits he knew nothing, and whose tongue he could not understand. For a moment he flinched at the thought of fever or accident. Rising from his chair, he walked on to the verandah. While he gazed, the prospect grew clear and distinct as the mists below thinned and melted.

He looked down the steep slopes of a high mountain, near whose summit his house was perched, the sides covered with great trees, their tops stretching in terraces down to the bottom of the valley. Between the boughs he caught here and there a glimpse of the village, its squalor veiled by distance. He saw the people's gay country cloths peeping out through the leaves, and far below at the bottom of the gorge he saw the blue waters of the river rushing and plunging over innumerable rapids and shallows. Range upon range of mountains rose in front of him and upon his left ; but on his right, the distance in that damp atmosphere looking greater than it in reality was, stretched a vast plain, treeless, and covered with high coarse grass, through which the river rolled smooth and placid, not to be disturbed till it reached the first set of rapids above which his house was built. The sun was dropping over the mountains ; but while it grew dusky in the gorges and valleys the great plain still glowed as the sun lowered a golden ladder and slowly descended to the earth. Insusceptible to colour and contrast, Prendergast yet felt the scene was good to look upon. He stared entranced till he heard footsteps behind him, and his black servant approached ushering in another native.

'This, sah, is the interpreter, Mr. Emanuel,' said Quashie with a wave of his hand. 'Come to see you, sah!'

Mr. Emanuel was clad in a tight suit of broken grey corduroys, his black skin protruding through its rents and chasms, giving him the appearance of being puffed and slashed with black velvet. He bowed low, and scratched one bare ankle with a shell-like nail.

'Mr. Emanuel?' said Prendergast inquiringly.

'Yes, sah, your interpreter. I also bring your sergeant.'

At his beckoning finger a small alert man neatly dressed in blue knickers and shirt stepped up, and, standing his carbine against the wall, saluted.

'Sergeant Akuffoo, sir,' he said.

'Yes,' said Prendergast.

'We hear, sah,' resumed the interpreter, 'that you come last night, and Captain Lynch goes away this morning. We hope, sah, he will live to reach his home, sah. Ask you if this first time you come to Africa, sah.'

Mr. Emanuel squirmed and twisted, and his mingled assurance and obsequiousness impressed Prendergast unpleasantly.

'Yes,' he said curtly, 'this is my first tour of service. I am tired now after a long journey. You must be here early to-morrow; and Mr. Emanuel,' he added, 'oblige me by not wearing those old rags when you are with me. Either a decent suit or a clean country cloth will be more suitable to you as a Government officer. Good-night. I will see the king to-morrow——!'

'King is sick, sah,' interrupted the interpreter.

'Well, be here in the morning any way,' said Prendergast.

The two men, bowing and saluting, departed, Prendergast having by his maladroit speech already weakened one of his supports, for the interpreter took himself gloomily away, out of conceit with the corduroys which he had always believed to be the last 'cry' in white man's clothing, though perhaps rather unsuitable to a tropical climate.

Next day Prendergast, accompanied by the sergeant and interpreter, cool and clean, and wrapped in a dark blue cloth, clambered down the narrow path to the town. From every naturally polite and at present kindly disposed native he received a salute and a word of welcome. Two hundred yards he had to go, but so steep was the descent that he walked down past the crown to the roots of an enormous cotton-wood tree. Then the slope grew less steep as he reached the broken level in the mountain-side, where the

houses were built ; then again, far below, he heard the roaring of the imprisoned river.

The old people were basking at the doors of their huts. He heard the cheerful laughter of the men working on the farms wrested with giant toil from the forest, a knot of men passed him with their nets slung over the shoulder on their way to the river. He saw a long line of bright-coloured bead-like objects, the gaudy cloths of the women bringing up water in a toiling row. In the market-place, under the great banyan—the palaver tree—sat the elders, forming the village club, smoking an occasional pipe and discussing municipal affairs.

From all he received a stare of friendly curiosity and a polite salutation, and when, in response to a wave of the interpreter's hand, the elders came forward, these men, who had probably not seen three white men in their lives, expressed a hope that his stay amongst them might be pleasant, and that he would be sorry to leave them when he went away.

Gold Coast architecture is inclined to be conservative. With some tribes square houses are the fashion ; in that case all the houses are square. A neighbouring tribe may have them circular with tapering pointed roofs ; then you will never see a square house. Farther on, again, a tribe will have low squat houses with flat roofs sown with grass ; then the town in the summer looks like a half-starved hayfield ; but, whatever the fashion is, it is rigidly kept to. Here, however, the building where the sick king was lying was a round house in a square village. Four long white-washed walls formed the compound. In the middle stood the house on a hard clean floor. Thirty feet in diameter, the roof rose up in a high pinnacle. A narrow opening in the wall gave entrance to the compound, and before the entrance there sat, on small wooden logs, three men. The centre man rose and politely bowed at Prendergast's approach.

'Will you ask him,' Prendergast said, 'how the king is to-day ? I should like to see him.'

The other two, who till now had remained seated, rose. The first man hesitated, and placed himself in front of the opening, when the police-sergeant moved up to Prendergast's side. The man stood aside, and Prendergast followed him, with the sergeant at his heels, into the house. The great room was spotlessly clean, but bare of all furniture save one thick grass mat spread out in the middle, upon which the sick man lay. By his side crouched an old

woman who lifted a calabash of water to his lips and wiped the sweat from his face. Prendergast knelt beside him and took his hand. It was evident that the poor old king's days were numbered, for he appeared to be in the last stages of consumption. At a word from the native he opened his eyes and, seeing a white face, endeavoured to raise himself; but his strength failed him. Prendergast, laying down his hand, walked from the house and rejoined the interpreter, who was awaiting him outside.

'Will you tell this man——' he said. 'By the way, who is he ?'

'He is a priest, sah,' said the interpreter—'a big priest.'

'Well, tell him that the king is very ill.'

The interpreter translated, and the man answered quietly.

'He says, sah, he will die—but not just yet. No one recovers from such sickness.'

'Can I do anything ? Is he a Christian ?' Prendergast asked.

A small woman, staggering under an enormous pot of water, attracted his attention, and he missed the astonished look on the faces round him as the interpreter put the question.

'No, sir,' said the interpreter, 'he is not'; and the priest, with a salutation, stepped into the compound and closed the interview by drawing a thatched hurdle across the opening.

Prendergast, dismissing his attendants, returned to his house thinking over what he had seen, and quite ignorant of the significance of the pointed hut among the square houses, though the smallest village child could have told him that it indicated the supreme religious rank of the dying man, who, priest as well as king, had the right to model his house on the fashion of the great temple at Kumassi. A couple of hours with Lynch, now well on his way to the coast, would have opened his eyes to many things—amongst them that he was face to face with a very serious situation should the king die and the funeral customs, with their peculiar ritual, be duly performed.

However, being ignorant, he was untroubled, and took up his new duties with keenness. No man, experienced or not, can run a district the size of an English county, his aides a semi-civilised interpreter and a police-sergeant with twenty men, without having to work. The innumerable reports that had to be not only written, but copied in his own hand alone, were sufficient to keep him busy, the more as his predecessor's illness had caused great arrears. For days together he hardly left his house till dark, and then only for a stroll along the ridge, spending his time writing till his hand

grew too tired to hold the pen, not going once down into the village, but receiving daily reports from the sergeant. The town and district were quiet and gave no trouble ; the sick king still lingered, and, as far as he knew, grew no worse ; all went well, and at the end of ten days' toil Prendergast got even with his work.

He was watching, one evening, Mr. Emanuel packing up the mails for headquarters and lifting the bag on to the carrier's head, when he felt a touch on his knee. Looking down, he saw the fattest and shiniest little black girl he had ever set eyes on. Her plump black skin positively shone with health and oil, and her eyes and teeth glistened with good humour. She looked about four years old, and was quite naked except for a double row of large bright yellow beads half hidden in the creases of her fat neck and waist, and strings of small blue ones round her legs and arms. Clean and bright as a new pin, she bloomed like a ripe plum ; and, so far from showing any fear of a white face, she stared gravely up at Prendergast, and with a crow of delight clutched him round his leg and hid her face. Extravagantly fond of children, Prendergast was delighted. Never had he seen such a baby, and, picking her up, he seated her on the table and called Quashie.

‘ This your daughter, Quashie ? ’ he said ; but the boy shook his head and walked into the bedroom.

‘ No, sah,’ he called, ‘ I don’t see this one before. Not mine, sah ! Don’t get one like that, sah ! ’

Prendergast, quite captivated, gave her a lump of sugar and lifted her down. She pressed her cheek against his hand and toddled down the two shallow verandah-steps into the dusk.

A man slipped from the bushes and, snatching her up, disappeared ; but, quick though he was, Prendergast recognised him as one of the men before the door—the man who had accompanied him into the king’s house. He heard the baby’s fat chuckle as her captor slipped away with her. Evidently she was not in the least frightened, and was quite ready to go.

He brought out his chair and sat down on the verandah. The village stirred from its afternoon drowse. The men had returned from the farms and the nets, and their cheerful talk rose up as they greased and massaged their tired bodies. As the darkness increased, fires glimmered and cooking-pots bubbled. The village was enjoying itself. He sat there late, and the village grew quiet. It was a moonless night, and on such nights people who depend on sun and moon go to bed early ; but the forest awoke ; its day was

just beginning. The insects sang and the undergrowth rustled, and the horrible scream of the two-toed sloth rising and falling—a cry that sent a British regiment flying to its arms—rang out far below; the mist swirled round him, and after a stiff nip of whisky he shook the ashes from his pipe and went shivering to bed.

He never expected to see the little girl again, and it was with feelings of very real pleasure that he saw her arrive the next evening smiling and bowing. She stayed the same length of time, accepted another lump of sugar, and smilingly departed, to be again caught up by her waiting escort. And so there began a curious friendship, for Prendergast, in his lonely position, felt his heart quite go out to the baby, and grew to look forward to her nightly visit as the brightest moment of the twenty-four hours. She never failed, never stayed beyond the accustomed time, and with a parting caress would disappear, to be caught up and carried chuckling away down to the town.

So the time passed steadily on till Prendergast had been in solitary state for six weeks. One gorgeous day he summoned his two Kroo boys, a couple of which tribe are allotted to each official as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and while the sun was yet high over the river descended with them to the water's edge, passing the lines of laughing women toiling upwards with the water-pots, and embarked in the Government canoe. Directly above the landing-place a high reef of black rock ran out well into mid-stream, and round it the current ran and boiled with the force of a mill-race. Turning her head down stream in the quiet waters, Prendergast made his boys paddle gently while he sat in the stern. An enthusiastic bird-collector, kingfishers were his special hobby, and he only wanted the big chestnut-coloured bird with white spotted breast to complete his collection. The river always held an immense charm for him, and an afternoon with the two boys born to the paddle was a keen delight. He sat smoking, watching the broad brown backs and the movement of the great muscles. Negroes of the negro though they were, they were as much aliens in a strange land as he himself.

The Kroo coast supplies its sons to the Gold Coast, three hundred miles away, and other Governments of the West Coast colonies to do the rougher work of the unskilled labourer. Though looked upon with deep contempt by the natives themselves as being of a lower class, they are in many instances of a better type than the negroes who despise them. They are brave; the Kroo coast sup-

plied no slaves in the old days, though many drowned themselves before the attempt to enslave them was abandoned ; they are hard-working and affectionate ; but their superstitions are lower even than those of the more civilised natives, and they are equally vain. At the end of their two years' service they never fail to return to their own country. They bear curious names, bestowed on them by their masters and the sailors on board the ships, where they do all the working of the cargo. The two in Prendergast's service were brothers, the eldest a red-haired giant known as 'Duke of Fife' ; his brother, scarcely smaller, was 'Ben Jonson.' Despised, they kept aloof safe in the shadow of the Government, patiently waiting for the day when a mile from the shore, with a hundred others, they would jump over the steamer's side and be pulled into the canoes awaiting them off their village.

Though there were plenty of brilliant birds on the river that afternoon, the spotted kingfisher was not one of them, and after an hour they turned up-stream. The deserted landing-place came in sight, and to Prendergast's delight he saw the longed-for bird sitting on the very end of the reef. The canoe pushed up to the rock's base, then turned and ran under its lee into mid-stream. The bird saw them and rose too late. She fell with a splash, but on the wrong side of the rock. With the greatest labour the boys twisted the canoe round the point to where the bird was floating. She flew up again, only to fall behind a clump of rushes. The boys stepped out into water barely ankle-deep, and hauled the canoe after her. Prendergast found he was at the mouth of a narrow cutting running into the forest, which met thick overhead. It was fringed with great rushes and cumbered with rotting boughs and the decay of centuries. It smelt stagnant and bitter. The mass of reeds in the rear shut off all signs of the cheerful river. He was in gloom and silence. Nevertheless he bade the boys, in a whisper, go on. Though there was barely room for the canoe, the water abruptly deepened. Then, after much twisting and turning, she emerged on to a small dismal pool. The great reeds for twenty feet fringed the banks, but the middle was clear. The clammy lifelessness of air and water was so overpowering that Prendergast felt poisoned. Across the pool he saw another opening. The Kroo boys in silence pushed the canoe into it. It was very short, and ended at the bank, and then Prendergast for the first time felt something of what lay behind the smiling goodwill of the people. He realised that here the old gods still lived. Not the gods of gorgeous temples and grand

processions, not the gods of blaring ceremonies in bright sunlight, but the secret and evil fetishes of the negro, the gods of solitude and dark places, whose very names must not be spoken aloud.

Prendergast, grasping a bough, pulled himself on shore. Beneath a huge tree stood a platform, and on it a great figure sat staring over the pool. Made of clay and painted red and white, the deformed hands rested on the knees. Protruding clay-coloured eyes stared from the head—fashioned half-snake, half-fish. Behind the big tree a narrow path ran up the almost sheer mountain-side.

On the Kroo boys the idol made no impression. They stared at him with contempt. Such as he was not in use on the Kroo Coast, so for them he had no terrors ; but to Prendergast the whole atmosphere was so evil, the aspect of the god so devilish in that foul and murky place, that he turned and fled and stumbled into the boat. Scarcely had he seated himself, when there came a great troubling of the water. The surface boiled and the canoe rocked. Duke of Fife steadied her with the paddle, and the pool quieted, but Prendergast, who had gazed deep down, his eyes close to the water, gripped the gunwale and lifted a face white and shining. For as the rocking of the canoe cleared away the filthy scum, he saw the shadowy indistinct form of a great reptile glimmer up through the black water, then sink slowly into the depths. He pointed with a shaky hand across the pool, and the Kroo boys rushed the canoe down the passage through the screen of reeds into the healthy living river.

Of the gods and goddesses of the grove Prendergast knew nothing beyond having a vague notion that West African people worshipped the 'fetish,' whatever that might be ; and consequently he did not know that the more secret a fetish is, the more baleful it is. The little gods that sit guarding the entrances to the villages in their leafy shrines, smiling, cheerfully indecent, with their hands on their knees, are of little power for evil—a handful of maize suffices for them ; but the secret ones, the gods of the grove, of the mountain, and swamp, of the deep recesses of the river, are powers with which the British Government has had, and still has, to reckon. The mysteries of solitude, gloom, and silent waters appeal to the native, and the arch-priests of the great fetishes place the homes of some of their most dreaded masters near the rivers.

March was gone, and with the coming of April the weather changed. The tornadoes gathered daily and broke ; the sun dis-

appeared for days together; great mists rose from the valley and swirled up the mountain-side. The town remained hidden; all was wet and stifling. Deprived of exercise, chilled, and depressed, the inevitable happened—the fever that in the pleasant sunny days he had laughed at seized on Prendergast. The distaste for the morning food and the craving for the hot tea were succeeded by a splitting head and racing pulse. Quashie, who had served many masters, administered the usual remedies, and in the morning the fever went, leaving Prendergast half-unconscious, his head singing and buzzing, yet dimly aware through all his discomfort of the little soft hand that clasped his own and helped to replace the rag soaked in the cool Florida water on his head. Then the fever returned; but on the fourth day Quashie's heroic doses of quinine prevailed, and the disease was broken.

'Near time, too. You take quinine fine, sah,' he said, as he shook the depleted bottle. 'It's nearly done.'

'And suppose the fever returns?' Prendergast groaned; but here Quashie reassured him.

'This fever dead, sah,' he said; 'I kill him. Before master get another we fill the bottle. You all right now, sah. Drink this soup, sah.'

Prendergast climbed shakily from his steaming blankets and sipped the strong hot broth. He put on flannels and a heavy dressing-gown and walked on to the verandah. There was a temporary break in the rains, and the day was warm and fair, though the mist hid the town below him. He looked out over an ocean of white fog, through which the peaks stood out like wooded islands. Everything was quiet; not a leaf stirred in the forest; not a sound rose up from the hidden town; only the great fog-wreaths swirled at his feet.

'How's the king, Quashie?' he called abruptly, his voice trembling and breaking, for his nervous system was shaken as much by the enormous doses of quinine as by the fever.

Quashie, who was airing the bedclothes, turned his back.

'Don't know, sah,' he replied; 'all the days you be sick, and this cloud come, I no go out, sah. He not dead, sah, or we hear the crying.'

'And where,' said Prendergast, sitting weakly down on his bed—'where's the baby? She was here when I was ill. Will she be here to-night? Where is she?'

'She come when you be sick, sah. I think she come to-night,

p'raps,' and the boy hurriedly closed the discussion by walking out of the room.

That evening the mist moved under a light breeze. Prendergast fancied he could make out the crowns of the bigger trees. He anxiously waited the child's coming. The drops off the leaves sounded like the patter of tiny feet. He felt sure he heard her coming. No one appeared; but he could not rid himself of the idea that someone was moving in the fog close to the house. He leant over the verandah-rail and listened with all his ears. He was on the point of calling out, when the boom of a great drum roared up to him. He could almost see the waves of sound forcing themselves up through the fog, and, as though the drum had been the flourish of the conductor's *bâton*, the town below broke out into a great mourning and crying. The drum stopped after a few beats, but the wailing grew louder and more shrill. The shouts of men arose, and Quashie dashed out.

'The king dies now,' he cried; 'he die in the fog.'

'Come here, Quashie,' Prendergast whispered. 'Listen! There's someone here.'

Out of the fog there came a little sound—half-cry, half-call.

'It's quite close,' Prendergast said; 'it's the baby.' Again they heard it; then came a rush of hurrying steps and a scuffle. Prendergast shouted weakly, but he could hear nothing more. He tottered to the table and swallowed half a tumblerful of whisky. The spirit ran through his veins like new life. He stopped shaking, and his voice grew strong and clear.

'Thank God for alcohol!' he said.

He turned, full of confidence, to the knocking at the door, and admitted the interpreter and police-sergeant.

'Did you meet anyone outside?' he asked—'that baby who comes here, alone, or with anyone?'

Both men shook their heads. 'No, sir,' the interpreter said, 'we saw no one. We come to report the king's dead.' And the sergeant nodded gravely.

'I shall come down into the town to-morrow,' Prendergast went on, 'if the fever does not come back. Have a runner to go down to Accra; I will report the king's death. Now I want that little girl found. Those are my orders. Bring her here to-morrow morning. That's all now.'

The interpreter bowed, and the sergeant saluted and departed. Prendergast swallowed more soup and went to bed. It was

fortunate that the fever had been broken, and fortunate, too, that he was so exhausted that he fell straightway into a deep sleep. Throughout the long night the village howled and keened over the dead king, ever increasing into louder uproar as the parties from the neighbouring towns arrived to swell the chorus. The drums roared and boomed through the darkness, but he slept unconscious. He awoke a new man, and found Quashie bending over him, who shook his head to the question he read in his master's eyes.

'No, sah,' he said, 'she not come.'

Prendergast, troubled and ill at ease, shaved, and tubbed, and ate his breakfast. The child's absence worried him, and the little episode of the previous night troubled him greatly. Still, the fever was killed, new life pulsed through his veins, and the day was a gorgeous one. The mists had gone again; he looked over mountain and plain, and saw his beloved river racing through the gorges. With the vigils of the night the drumming had ceased, though the women were still wailing. No one seemed moving below; so, grasping a long stick, he set off slowly down the path. The streets and houses were deserted, but on turning into the open space before the king's house he found it packed with people sitting quiet on the ground listening to the wailing going on within.

Behind a table sat three men with handkerchiefs bound like coronets round their heads, and wrapped in mourning-cloths of dark blue. The table was strewn with calabashes full of fermented palm-wine and a few bottles of raw gin. Had a coast town been the scene, where gin was plentiful, the custom would have already become an orgy. At his entry the priest whose acquaintance he had previously made met him and escorted him to a seat at the table. Another man politely handed him a calabash of wine, and, as Prendergast took it, to his great astonishment he recognised his police-sergeant. Before he could demand what he was doing there, and why he was not in uniform, the man said quietly, 'Beside sergeant I am chief here, sir,' and, taking the calabash, threw out the few drops and put it down on the table. Prendergast, quite bewildered, sat down and gasped. A man, nude save for the tiniest of waist-cloths, stepped out and, to the accompaniment of the drums, shouted and postured. In front of Prendergast he stopped.

'Why, surely,' Prendergast said, 'that's Mr. Emanuel, the interpreter!'

'Besides interpreter he is also the king's brother,' said the sergeant gravely. 'He makes the death dance for the king.'

Inexperienced though he might be, Prendergast felt terribly uneasy. Here were the two men on whom he must rely not only with the people, but of them. It took him some time to grasp the situation. In his ignorance he did not know whether such things were customary or not. All seemed safe; the people were quietly watching the dances, and there was not enough gin to excite them. None of the police were to be seen. The drums stopped, and Mr. Emanuel, retiring, returned clad in the corduroys. Prendergast had the good sense to remain quiet, and when the sergeant and another chief invited him to enter the hut he silently accompanied them. The dead king, washed, and oiled, and painted thick with circles and spots of gold, sat propped up on a stool. His jaw was tied up with a black ribbon, and a long clay pipe was stuck in his mouth. His ancient mother sat beside him. Prendergast gazed at the body, which, with eyelids kept open with splinters, stonily returned his stare. The crying women, who had become silent at his entry, resumed their wailing. While he was yet staring, a great noise rose up outside the hut. Big drums roared and dropped into rhythm, jangles and horns joined in, the people sang and hummed in a low chant. Prendergast, who was intensely excited, turned to the door, but the two men barred the way.

‘You not look there,’ the sergeant said.

For a moment Prendergast was nonplussed. No one was breaking any law. He had no business to interfere. Then he felt the impulse that pulls men through. No one had a better right to know what went on in his district than he, and see he would.

‘Report yourself at my quarters,’ he said. ‘You may be a chief, but you are my sergeant. Stand away!’ He pushed him aside and went out. The people were lined up four deep, preventing him from seeing, but he could catch an occasional glimpse of what seemed a procession. He elbowed and pushed till he forced his way to the front. He saw a stool upon a board carried on men’s heads, and covered with a cloth that reached to the ground. He could see the black feet shuffling along. On the stool sat a small white figure, the hands clasped behind the head. The whole affair reminded him of some grotesque pantomime animal. As it passed slowly between the lines of people they threw up small branches to the figure on the chair, swaying as its bearers postured to the drum-beats. It was some distance away, but some movement or pose recalled to Prendergast the idol by the pool. It reached the end, and, turning, began to advance along his side of the open space,

when the sergeant pushed roughly past him, and, raising his hand, cried out. The white figure was spun violently round and round, then vanished ; the noise ceased, the people disappeared into the bushes, and Prendergast found himself alone staring at the sergeant.

‘What was that thing ?’ he said.

The sergeant drew his cloth over his shoulders. ‘Nothing for the white man to see,’ he said.

‘What was it they were carrying ?’ repeated Prendergast, furious at the man’s manner ; but the sergeant did not answer. ‘What was it ?’ Prendergast repeated. ‘I order you to answer. You are my sergeant. What are you doing ? Why aren’t you in uniform ?’

The sergeant bowed. ‘The Government always gives leave in such times,’ he said.

Prendergast did not know if this was true, but the sergeant had not applied for any leave. ‘You are doing this without asking my permission,’ he said ; but the sergeant shrugged his shoulders in contempt, and slipped into the forest. Prendergast tried the door of the king’s house, but found it fast, and then climbed the hill to his quarters.

It occurred to him, as he clambered painfully up, that he had hardly expected this sort of thing when, as a full-fledged barrister, he had applied for his district commissionership. His legal knowledge seemed likely to be more of a hindrance than a help, as it impelled him to administer beautifully framed laws which no one would obey, and to entertain scruples which he himself felt to be out of place. Not till he reached his door did he remember that he had seen nothing of the baby. The house was empty, Quashie and the Kroo boys having gone off to view the ceremonies, but a newly arrived mail-bag lay on the table. He broke the seals and cut the string, the contents pouring out and falling, some on the table, some on the floor. The first letter he opened was in an unknown hand.

‘My dear Prendergast,’ it began, ‘I would have written from Sierra Leone, but was too ill. I write these few lines to tell you I’m better, and shall get home all right. I was sorry to leave you as I did, and fear you may be having a rough time. If the king dies, look out for human sacrifices. He is priest as well as king, and one child, if not two, will certainly be killed. There is one that has been chosen and kept in readiness, though I could not find it ; but if you see one, probably a female, remarkable for its looks and well-being, keep a watchful eye——’

Prendergast felt very sick, and let the letter fall; then he picked it up.

‘Your boy Quashie can help you. However, I hope the king won’t die, and then it will be all plain sailing. I have written the Governor fully.’

Prendergast, as he put the letter back into its envelope, noticed that it was written from Grand Canary.

He laid the letter down, and steadied himself against the wall. When his brain cleared he saw Quashie, followed by the two Kroo boys, coming up from the river with the daily supply of water. ‘And Quashie can help me. Quashie knows, does he?’ said Prendergast. He heard the splash of the water as they poured it into the bath, and Quashie, carrying the towels, entered, announcing that the bath was ready. Prendergast took no notice, and Quashie repeated it, vaguely aware as he met his master’s eyes that something was wrong.

‘Where’s that little girl?’ Prendergast said gently.

Quashie pretended to shake out the towels. ‘Think she soon come, sah,’ he said.

‘And how long were you with Captain Lynch before he got ill?’

‘Oh, long time, sah; six, seven year, I think, sah. Only stay with you till he come back, sah.’

‘Quashie,’ Prendergast said, ‘to-day I got a letter from him. Listen!’ And he read to near the end. ‘Now,’ said Prendergast, laying it down, ‘tell me two things. Are they going to kill a child, and is that child the baby?’

‘I hear, sah,’ said Quashie uneasily, ‘that some one will follow the king—that’s all, sah.’

‘And you don’t know any more?’

‘No, sah.’ And Quashie, thinking the ordeal was over, smiled and picked up his towels.

‘There are two more words in the letter,’ Prendergast said, ‘two little words—“Quashie knows.” Duke of Fife and Ben Jonson come here.’

The great hulking boys marched into the room. ‘Catch Quashie,’ said Prendergast.

At the touch of the great fingers Quashie, whose bravery was not his strong point, collapsed, and fell on his knees.

‘Yes, sah,’ he sobbed, ‘your small baby be king’s messenger. They keep her for that. To-day they carry her round and give her message. This night she go to him.’

'And you knew this all the time she was coming here, and I got so fond of her?' said Prendergast.

Quashie nodded through his tears. 'That's what she for,' he said, 'to go to the king.'

'Let him go,' Prendergast said; and Quashie stood up and dried his eyes on the towels.

'Where have they taken her?' said Prendergast. 'You don't know? Duke of Fife, twist Quashie's arm.'

The Kroo boy grunted and pushed Quashie contemptuously aside. 'Massa,' he said, 'the thing by the river. We see him!'

The scene by the pool, forgotten in the hurrying events of the last few days, flashed across Prendergast's mind. It did not need a glance at Quashie's face to assure him that at last he held the clue to the whole business.

'Don't be frightened,' he said, 'I won't say you told me. Duke of Fife, go into the town, find all the police you can, and bring them here. Quashie, get breakfast at once.'

Duke of Fife disappeared down the path, and Quashie began to lay the table, so unnerved by his late experience that Prendergast's thoughts were punctuated with the smash of falling crockery. He was facing a difficulty that would have tried most men very high. He stood single-handed (for Quashie was evidently useless) against a fanaticism as stern and real as any belonging to a higher civilisation. Its arch-priest was dead, and the culminating rite ready to be carried out. His right-hand man not only against him, but one of the chief parties concerned; and his interpreter, useful only as a medium of communication, faithless as well. He was sufficiently broad-minded to understand, so he bore no malice against his opponents. He realised that their rites were traditional and proper enough in their eyes, and he recognised that he had but one weapon—the colour of his skin; or rather two, for another force was at work—his affection for the little girl. 'I'll stop it somehow,' Prendergast said.

Now, could these things have occurred to Captain Lynch, his procedure would have been simple. He would, when the king's death became a certainty, have summoned the fetish men, told them of his suspicions, and ordered the baby to be produced every twenty-four hours till the period of mourning for the dead king was over. This done, he would have sat down and smoked without worrying, but Duke of Fife, or some other trusted messenger, would have carried post-haste to the coast an urgent request for

a company of Hausas. If on their arrival the baby was not forthcoming, Lynch, without further argument, would have arrested everyone concerned, packed them off under escort to Accra, and, if sufficient evidence was obtainable, have hanged every man concerned in the murder. In any event, he would have burnt the king's house and thrown every fetish he could lay hands on into the river, secure in his knowledge of the people that he was acting justly, and quite regardless whether the law upheld him or not. Nor would his sergeant of police have shown himself anything but a zealous and capable officer.

Prendergast stayed in his house all that day. Late in the afternoon Duke of Fife reported that the sergeant had sent the police away, and that no people were to be seen, nor were the women down at the river, that the Government canoe was sunk with a big hole in her side, and that the town canoes had disappeared.

With an idea of making the best of matters, and from some feeling he could not quite understand, Prendergast carefully shaved and put on a new suit. As he buttoned his last gaiter-button a line in Lynch's letter recurred to him, 'I have written the Governor fully'; and, like sister Ann from the battlements, he looked from his verandah for a sign of help. But there was none; the forest was dark and silent. He picked up his gun and filled his pockets with cartridges.

'Are you coming with me, Quashie?' he asked; but the look on Quashie's face was enough, and he sallied forth on his quest alone.

Ere he had taken a dozen steps he heard a growl and a shriek, and, turning, he saw Quashie with streaming nose picking himself up out of the bath, while the two Kroo boys, their heavy paddles over their shoulders, strode down the path after him.

'Massa,' growled Duke of Fife, 'we come look for small girl. We no fear—eh, Ben?' And big Ben Jonson blushed, and, while trying to hide behind his still bigger brother, swore that he had no fear.

Prendergast stopped and wiped his face. Here was help, and, what was more, moral support. If these despised men-of-all-work, these negroes of the negro, these eaters of strange flesh, were not afraid, it was not for him to flinch. He stretched out his hands and grasped those of the gratified savages, and the dauntless trio sallied forth down into the town just as the sun set behind the farther mountains. The streets were empty and the doors all closed, but he could hear the whisperings and hushed cries as he

walked between the houses attended by his mighty escort. Once he turned aside to find a nude man pressed limpet-like against a broken wall, who laughed noiselessly when he saw he was discovered, and refused to move. Once an excited youth appeared and danced before him, then, running ahead, spat on the ground, to be knocked senseless the next moment by a blow from Ben Jonson's mighty fist. And Prendergast applauded; the battle had begun, the influences of accustomed law and order were slipping from him, and the natural man stood out sound and brutal.

Leaving the young man where he lay, they marched to the king's house. There was no one to be seen; the door was fastened, and it seemed deserted. There was no one to question, no one to fight with. To get to the idol was his one idea, but the way was closed; the canoe was sunk and the rock unclimbable. Standing helpless in the falling shadows, he felt deserted by God and man.

But primitive man can match primitive man when learning fails and civilisation is but a hindrance, and the Kroo boys had been searching carefully. Before his fit of depression had passed Duke of Fife led him to where a dozen little paths ran devious into the forest. All seemed alike, but across one of them was stretched a foot from the ground a single black thread. The gloom was thickening as Ben Jonson ran back for the hurricane lantern; before he returned the forest was black in the early night-fall. Smashing the thread, they followed the forbidden path. It entered the forest, twisted to the right, then to the left, as if uncertain, and then plunged abruptly down towards the river. So steep and rough was it that they could only descend with the utmost difficulty. In parts it was a mere watercourse covered with great boulders, over which the sweating Prendergast was roughly hauled. But that it was a path, and the right one, the fetish threads they met with showed. To break even one of these insignificant but deadly monitors through which they were so recklessly ploughing meant a sure and speedy vengeance on the part of the priests. Never did the most ferocious notice of man-traps and spring-guns warn away trespassers as did these little black threads. But here again the weapon of his white skin served him. Sheer down went the path, and Prendergast could hear the rushing of the river, when he caught the echo of a faint wailing cry, and saw the glimmering of a light. It quickly brightened as they went down, and became a large fire shining and glistening on the trunks and leaves; and, pulling himself over a great stone,

nearly exhausted he stepped on to the level bank, and walked boldly up to the fire.

Before him sat the great idol staring into the pool, the flicker of the firelight throwing strange shadows and colours on to the black surface of the water. Across the knees of the fetish lay a long bundle, and he heard again the low melancholy cry. The air was chilly as well as damp and muggy by the water, and he shivered even as he perspired. Weakened by the fever, he was dizzy and exhausted, and sat down on a boulder while one of the Kroo boys put his arm round him to support him. The fire before the image spluttered and crackled, occasionally almost dying out, then burning up again, till at last, when Prendergast thought they must have been there a long time, it found a large piece of very dry wood, and broke into a bright fierce blaze, throwing its light right across the pool. He saw, again, the disturbance of the water that he had seen on his first visit, but now there arose from the shining surface a white dreadful head that stared blindly at him. And as it glided full into the light he saw clearly the form of what appeared to be an enormous water-snake. Again came the low cry, and the head floated gently towards them. Prendergast, hardly knowing what he did, raised his gun, but the Kroo boys, who had stared paralysed, awoke. Ben Jonson snatched the weapon from him, and, as the head reached the shore and began to raise itself from the water, Duke of Fife, with a great bellow, rushed forward and snatched the bundle from off the knees of the god. A sickness fell upon Prendergast, and when he came to himself he found that he was high up the path, Ben Jonson's arms around him, and Duke of Fife throwing water in his face.

He rose and held dizzily to a tree, feeling that death was very close. He pointed upwards. 'You boys help me,' he whispered. Duke of Fife slipped his great hand under his arm. 'We go,' he shouted; 'we go! But we catch small girl! Hi, Ben.'

Ben Jonson very gently unrolled the bundle. Prendergast lifted the cloth, and the little child was in his arms.

'Come,' he said, 'light the lamp.'

Day was breaking when they emerged into the open space in front of the king's house.

It was fairly light when they left the trees, and Prendergast saw the table with its load of palm-wine and gin placed again before the entrance and the three chiefs seated behind it. The sergeant rose and stepped out in front of him.

'You must give me that child, sir,' he said; and he spoke the words quite respectfully, and with no appearance of anger.

'She stays with me,' said Prendergast hoarsely.

'I tell you you must give her up, sir; she does not belong to you.'

'Nor to you. She goes to Accra.'

The sergeant still spoke quite quietly. 'Neither she nor you will go to Accra,' he said. 'I want her now; you must give her up.'

Prendergast put the baby down. 'You boys!' he said; and the brave Kroo boys strode in front of her.

'I'll shoot the first man who tries to take her,' Prendergast said.

The sergeant paused and stared at the small party. He turned round and raised both his hands palms outward above his head. The space filled with men armed with cutlasses and heavy sticks.

'Now,' he said, 'give me the girl and the Kroo boys and go.'

Prendergast stepped forward and kicked a mark on the sand.

'The first over that,' he said, 'I shoot.' And he raised the gun.

The sergeant, despair written plain upon his face, but firm in his fanaticism, turned again to the crowd and spoke to them, then to the white man. 'When the shadow strikes this mark you yourself have made,' he said.

'Stand by me now, you boys,' said Prendergast, while he watched the shadow creep closer to the mark.

The sergeant faced towards the river, and, throwing up his arms, cried aloud thrice. 'I call on my God,' he said.

'And I on mine,' said Prendergast.

Issue was joined. They stood motionless and silent, staring at each other. The invocation seemed to have stopped the day, but the shadow moved. After a long, an immense, interval it reached the mark, hesitated, and crawled over it. With a supreme gesture the priest flung out his hand, when from far away out of the dense forest below there came the thin clear notes of a bugle. Again floated up the tiny call.

'Mine's won,' said Prendergast, stepping forward and snapping the cartridges from his gun. 'They'll be here in half an hour. Get back to your houses. Sergeant, tell all these people to keep indoors. Put on your uniform and report yourself. You are under arrest.'

Half an hour later he was welcoming the Hausas as they streamed in a long line out of the forest and crossed the river.

W. H. ADAMS.

SMALL TALK WITH MY FATHER.

ÆTATIS SUÆ, LXXXIX.

SCENE.—*Garden of a St. John's Wood house. The old artist is sitting in the September sunshine smoking a cigar, in tranquil contemplation of the creeper already beginning to show signs of autumn. Here and there a leaf falls. He peers at Filius descending the steps and scarcely appears to recognise him.*

PATER (cheerfully, as *Filius approaches*). Hullo, young fellow ! So it's you, is it ? You're most amazingly sunburnt. Where do you come from ?

[*Filius gives details of remote and highly attractive watering-place on the Dorsetshire coast. Nine-hole golf course, fishermen's cottages, quaint harbour, lovely country, etc., etc.*]

PATER. Never heard of the place. (With a Londoner's amazement) Only one shop ? Whereabouts is it ?

FILIUS. About eighteen miles west of Weymouth. You remember Weymouth ?

PATER. Certainly. (Simply) I got tipsy there. The only time in my life I ever got tipsy was at Weymouth.

FILIUS (dramatically). Father ! How was that ? When ?

PATER. I should think about '57. The Mayor gave a dinner and would invite me ; a great hot Corporation dinner, mind you, in the middle of a blazing summer day. I never noticed anything wrong, had no idea I'd had too much to drink till I got outside. Then I found I couldn't walk straight. I shall never forget how the pavement seemed to waver and rise at me. And your mother's face when I got home and stood there smiling at her ! 'William !' 'My dear ?' 'The best thing you can do is to go to bed.' (Rubs his nose and chuckles.) So I went.

FILIUS. Weren't you ashamed ?

PATER (simply). I suppose I was. I don't remember. I know I'd the most horrible headache in the morning, and never got tipsy again. Neither before, nor since. (Annoyed.) And I don't know now how it happened.

FILIUS. And what have you been doing with yourself here all August ?

PATER. Painting. What else is there to do? I'll show you something presently indoors. (*Brightening*) Oh, and I say! what do you think? I was sitting out here yesterday and heard voices at the front door, someone inquiring anxiously for me. So I went to see who it was. There I found a most respectable elderly man, with a white moustache.

FILIUS. Who was it?

PATER. You remember my picture of the 'Merry Making'?

FILIUS. Of course.

PATER. There's a group in the right-hand corner, of children and young people pushing the old grandfather to make him join in the dance. One of them is a boy, snapping his fingers.

FILIUS. I remember.

PATER. Well, the old fellow had sat for the boy.

FILIUS. In '45?

PATER. Ah! I remembered him perfectly, knew him again at once. The face was exactly the same. (*Gravely*) Except, of course, that he'd got a white moustache. And from that day to this, sixty-two years, I'd never set eyes on him.

FILIUS. What did he want? More sittings?

PATER. Not at all. Nothing, except just to ask how I was, and to shake hands with me. (*Chuckles*.) I gave him that inestimable privilege and he went away, quite satisfied.

FILIUS. There can't be many of those old models left alive.

PATER. I imagine not. The old grandfather, by the way, I got out of the Paddington workhouse. In those days they used to let us hire models out of the workhouse, at a shilling an hour; but the poor creatures could never pass the public houses going home, and used to return so outrageously tipsy the authorities were obliged to put a stop to it.

FILIUS. Wasn't the old nobleman with his hands tied behind his back in the 'Claude Duval' out of the Paddington workhouse?

PATER. He was; a wonderfully handsome, dignified old fellow. I remember one day when he was sitting to me he said, quite seriously, 'Now I advise you always to take great care of your money. If I hadn't taken the greatest care of mine, I should have been in the workhouse long before I was.' (*Chuckles*.) He'd been there for about thirty years, I believe.

FILIUS. Who sat for the grandmother in the 'Merry Making'?

PATER. Oh, that was Mrs. King, our washerwoman. She sat to me again in 'Ramsgate Sands.' One day when I was painting

her I quoted some lines from Shakespeare. 'Them's lovely lines,' she said. 'I should think they are; they're Shakespeare's.' She looked rather puzzled, so I said, 'You've heard of Shakespeare, haven't you?' 'Yes, sir,' says she; 'wasn't he something in your line?'

FILIUS. Did Mrs. King also sit for the gipsy with the child on her back, telling fortunes?

PATER. Dear me, no. That was a genuine gipsy I found selling matches outside the house at Park Village West; before your time, when we were living in the Regent's Park, at the top of Albany Street. I'd the greatest difficulty in making her understand what I wanted and getting her into the painting-room. I got her in at last and just turned my back for a moment, winding up the easel or something, and there she was scuttling up the stairs out of the room again, as fast as she could go.

FILIUS. What had frightened her?

PATER. She'd caught sight of the man in armour standing in the corner. 'I ain't a-coming back with that steel man there,' she said. However, I persuaded her at last, and she came back and sat capitally. I asked her how old her baby was. She said it wasn't hers; it was her daughter's, and she couldn't remember whether it was born 'in 'opping time, or racing time.' You see, those were the only two divisions of the year she knew. Now come along indoors, and I'll show you what I've been doing.

[They go indoors, into the painting-room on the ground floor.

The easel is empty.]

FILIUS. Well? Where is it?

PATER. Don't be in a hurry. Plenty of time. (*Mysteriously*) Just you turn your back and look out of the window. Don't you turn round till I tell you.

[Filius looks obediently out of window, down the long sunny stretch of Clifton Hill. Nothing to be seen there but a piano organ, playing 'By the Side of the Zuyder Zee.' Behind him, Pater is heard moving about cautiously, fetching the picture, humming a little to himself as he does so. At last the easel creaks.]

PATER (triumphantly). Now you can look. (*Filius turns to find Pater standing by the easel, anxiously awaiting the effect on him of a capitally painted head of an old gentleman with blue eyes and a little very white whisker.*) Well, what do you think of it? Say just what you like. No one's seen it yet.

FILIUS. Wonderfully like. You did it looking at yourself in the glass, I suppose ?

PATER (*pleased*). That's it. But don't mind saying anything that strikes you. I want to get it right.

[*On being pressed, Filius makes minor criticisms—hair a little too dark—upper lip a trifle too thin—mouth not set quite straight under the nose, etc.*]

PATER (*examines picture closely*). Very likely. I dare say you're right. That's just the sort of thing I want to be told. I'll attend to it. What about sending it to the Exhibition next year, eh ? (*Chuckles*.) I think of calling it 'Portrait of a Young Art Student.' (*Resentfully*) By the way, I'd quite made up my mind I was going to be ninety in January, and now I find I'm only eighty-nine. (*Gravely*) I've been telling everyone I shall be ninety. It's rather a sell. (*Cheerfully*) Anyway, I shall be in my ninetieth year. That's something. Have a cigar ? (*Clips off end of cigar and hands it, looking all the while at picture on easel. Slyly*) So you'd really have known who it was, eh ? You wouldn't have mistaken it for anybody but me ? Rather different from that young gentleman, isn't he ? (*Points to dark Opie-looking portrait hanging on the wall, of a young man with a quantity of dark brown hair tumbling over a broad straight brow.*)

FILIUS. How old were you when you painted that ?

PATER. About eighteen.

FILIUS. How good it is.

PATER (*simply*). Just one of those lucky flukes a young fellow sometimes brings off, you know, without in the least knowing how. I did it in the glass, in the little back room in Osnaburgh Street. Then I lost sight of it, never saw it again for at least forty years.

FILIUS. How was that ?

PATER. Someone must have stolen it out of my painting-room. However, one day, walking down Great Titchfield Street, I saw it again quite by chance in an old furniture shop.

FILIUS. What did they want for it ?

PATER. Twenty pounds.

FILIUS. Did they know who it was ?

PATER. Oh, yes. 'That's a portrait of Frith,' the woman in the shop said ; 'the man who paints railway stations and things. You've heard of him ?' 'Yes,' I said, 'I have. But twenty pounds is a good deal to ask for him.' 'He was a great friend of my 'usband,' the woman said. 'Of course you know he's dead.'

‘No,’ I said, ‘I didn’t know that.’ ‘Yes, he is ; he died of drink, poor fellow.’ ‘Did he ?’ I said. ‘That’s very sad.’ ‘Yes,’ says she, ‘my ’usband was very fond of him, and I don’t know whether I really ought to sell it. Why, I remember my ’usband coming home one day and saying he’d just been to see him, sitting with him while he was painting one of his big pictures, and he was *that drunk !*—Well, there, my ’usband said, “ how Frith can paint with his ’and shaking like that, I don’t know.” ’

FILIUS. Didn’t you undeceive her ?

PATER. Not I. One of the boys was with me at the time. I always thought it was you ? (*Filius shakes head.*) Whichever it was, he behaved beautifully and never said a word. So I gave her 20*l.* for it, and there it is.

FILIUS (*looks about him*). Haven’t you been rearranging the pictures ?

PATER. Some of them. I wanted a better light for the Harlow.

FILIUS. Do you remember where you got that ? (*Points to beautiful little unfinished head of a girl by Sir Edwin Landseer.*)

PATER. I gave seventy guineas for it at Christie’s, at Landseer’s sale after his death in ’73. It used to hang in his painting-room in St. John’s Wood. I often saw it there. I remember once asking him who sat for it. He shook his head sentimentally and said it was poor dear Lady Mary something or other, the daughter of the dear Duchess. Then his brother Charles saw it one day when I’d got it home in Pembridge Villas. ‘Hullo !’ he said, ‘I see you’ve bought poor Edwin’s sketch of Polly Wheedle,’ or some such name.

FILIUS (*amused*). Just an ordinary model.

PATER (*dryly*). Anyway, it wasn’t poor dear Lady Mary, the daughter of the dear Duchess.

FILIUS. Charles Landseer said some funny things.

PATER. Oh, very. I remember a picture painted by Herbert—

FILIUS. The man who Dickens said fell down at Boulogne and broke his English.

PATER (*laughs*). Yes. It was a fight on the banks of a canal in Venice ; bravos, that sort of thing, and one of them was in the water ; stabbed, I suppose, and just disappearing with his mouth open. Herbert was in difficulties about a title for it, and Charles at once suggested ‘Bubble and Squeak.’

FILIUS. Dickens was very fond of Edwin Landseer, wasn’t he ?

PATER. Very ; always used to call him *Lanny*. You remember my portrait of Dickens in the Forster collection ?

FILIUS. Of course.

PATER. Forster commissioned it when Dickens was clean shaved, and then suddenly for some unknown reason he began to grow a moustache. I told Forster and asked what I was to do. 'Oh, it's just a fancy of his,' Forster said. 'He'll soon have it off; it's merely a fancy. We'll wait.' However, Dickens not only stuck to his moustache but began growing a beard as well, and as Forster didn't want to wait any longer and there was no sign of a shave, I began painting him, beard and all.

FILIUS. That would be about '59?

PATER. Just about. I know he was writing 'A Tale of Two Cities.' I saw the manuscript on his desk, beginning, 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.' Some mornings he scarcely wrote more than half a dozen lines; walking about the room and making the most dreadful faces. (*Looking puzzled*) Let me see; what was it I was going to tell you?

FILIUS. Something about Dickens and Landseer?

PATER. Oh, yes! Well, one day when Dickens was sitting the servant came up to tell me Sir Edwin Landseer was below. Dickens said, 'Let's have him up; he hasn't seen my beard and moustache yet.' Charles Landseer and Edwin had been abroad for some time together in Italy, and they hadn't all met for months. Edwin came up and took no notice of the beard, and at last Dickens said, 'Well, Lanny, what about all this? D'you like it? Think it's an improvement?' 'Oh, a great improvement,' Landseer said, quite gravely. 'It hides so much more of your face.' Dickens wasn't the least offended; he'd let *Lanny* say anything.

FILIUS. Dickens seems to have been singularly free from the deficiencies usually attributed to the literary character. I mean in the way of envy and hatred of contemporaries, self-advertisement, desire to talk of himself and his own performances, and so on.

PATER. From his talk you'd never have known he'd ever written a line. I remember once saying to him, quite innocently, of someone or other, 'Oh, he's a sort of Mrs. Harris.' He didn't appear to notice it; never moved a muscle.

FILIUS (*pointing to copy of Rembrandt's portrait in the Louvre*). That's a pretty good copy of the Rembrandt, isn't it?

PATER. No, I don't think it is; not very. I did it in Paris, in the year 1840. I know that was the year, because while we were there Louis Napoleon was being tried for that crack-brained attempt of his at Boulogne.

FILIUS. Who was with you ?

PATER. My brother Charles. We stayed at the Hôtel de France et Champagne, in the rue Montmartre. I used to paint all day in the Louvre, while Charles stopped at home, reading law. Ah, he'd have been Lord Chancellor if he'd lived, poor fellow. He was a pupil of Roundell Palmer's, who told me so, years afterwards.

FILIUS. Wasn't Charles taken ill while you were there ?

PATER. He was ; I had to call in the doctor for him, a Scotchman. When he got better (he didn't die till '53, you know) and I asked the doctor for his bill, I remember he looked about rather queerly at the sketching things, and said, ' You're an artist, aren't you ? Well, we mustn't skin a flint. Suppose we say ten francs.' (*Simply*) Artists were considered rather poor devils then, in 1840.

FILIUS. Did you do any other work there, except copies in the Louvre ?

PATER. Yes, I had a model, a Frenchman. I only wanted to paint his head, but he would strip himself stark naked to show me his figure ; he said he had a magnificent figure and had been painted by all the great French artists. (*Laughs.*) And what did the silly beggar do then but dance ; he declared he was the best dancer in Paris. I can see him now, waltzing stark naked about our hotel bedroom, holding a box of mine for a partner.

FILIUS. Didn't you young gentlemen chaff him about Waterloo ?

PATER. Oh, of course ; but he never seemed to mind in the least. He said that if it hadn't been for the *quatre puissances*, Bonaparte would have eaten us up.

FILIUS. Did you see much of Paris ?

PATER. Not a great deal ; we were too busy. We always used to dine at Ricard's, a two-franc restaurant in the Palais Royal. Choice of three dishes and dessert. The dessert was always a meringue ; everybody had a meringue for dessert. I can hear the waiter now, chanting to Madame Ricard behind the counter, ' Une meringue pour dessert, Madame ' ; always in exactly the same melancholy tone of voice. (*Chants lugubriously*) ' Une meringue pour dessert, Madame ! '

FILIUS. Ricard's is still in the Palais Royal. So is the Hôtel de France et Champagne in the rue Montmartre, just the same.

PATER (*wonderingly*). Is it, now ? There was a glass bureau in the courtyard—

FILIUS. So there is still. At least, I saw it there last year.

PATER. Ah ! The young lady who kept the books used to sit in it with the manageress ; they called Charles and me ' the mutes, because we were too shy ever to speak to them. Aie ! It's a long time ago. Sixty-seven years. We came all the way from Havre to Paris by diligence. (*A pause.*) Give me a light, old boy ; my cigar's gone out.

FILIUS (*gives light*). The Harlow looks well.

PATER. What does ?

FILIUS (*loudly*). Harlow's portrait of old Northcote. Looks well.

PATER (*turns to look at it*). I should think it does. Not many men can paint a head like that nowadays.

FILIUS. Where did you get it ?

PATER. Gave nine and a half guineas for it at Christie's. Fancy the donkeys letting it go for that ! Why, it's one of the finest heads ever painted. I've left it to the Academy.

FILIUS. Harlow died young, didn't he ?

PATER (*simply*). Blazed himself out at thirty-two. Great blackguard, poor chap. Pupil of Lawrence's, you know.

FILIUS. Isn't there some story of his painting a sign outside an inn at Epsom, and signing it with Lawrence's name ? Just to spite him, after they'd quarrelled ?

PATER. Ah ! Then Lawrence and he met by accident in Portland Place. ' Harlow,' says Lawrence, ' if this wasn't a long street, do you know what I'd do ? ' ' I can't guess,' says Harlow. ' Why, I'd kick you from one end to the other of it.' ' Would you, now ! ' Harlow grinned. ' Then let us be thankful it *is* a long street.' But what an artist the beggar was ! Just look at his portraits of the Kemble family, in the ' Queen Catherine.' Nearly all perished, though, from that beastly asphaltum. (*A pause while Filius examines Northcote. Then Pater chuckles.*)

FILIUS. What are you laughing at ?

PATER. I was thinking of a ridiculous scene I once saw years ago in Pall Mall. Two gentlemen meeting in Pall Mall, just about opposite Waterloo House ; I was walking behind one of them. Then suddenly, just as they met, one seized the other by the nose and wrung it hard. Oh, a long time ; (*simply*) thought he'd pull it off.

FILIUS. Some old quarrel, I suppose.

PATER. I suppose so. Funny thing was, during the operation neither said a word—at any rate, that I heard—and when it was over, they parted and went on just as if nothing had happened.

FILIUS. That must have been a long time ago. Nobody thinks of pulling a man's nose nowadays.

PATER (*solemnly*). It was in 1832. I know I saw Talleyrand walking in Brook Street the same day. My uncle pointed him out to me, a tall bent old man with very white hair. 'There goes Talleyrand, sir,' said my uncle, giving me a terrific nudge in the ribs. So I've never forgotten it.

FILIUS. Well, good-bye. You're going down to Eastbourne to-morrow, so I'll give you a riddle to take with you. Have you heard it?

PATER (*cautiously*). Depends what it is.

FILIUS. 'When is an artist not an artist'?

PATER (*puzzled*). Well? What's the answer?

FILIUS. 'Ninety-nine times out of a hundred.'

PATER. (*Laughs, delighted*) Oh, I say; that's rather good. I must try to remember that. (*Is left chuckling and repeating riddle.*)

WALTER FRITH.

LANDSCAPE AND LEGISLATION.

AMONG the measures which the Session of 1907 contributed to the Statute-book is one entitled the 'Advertisements Regulation Act.' It might, without any violence to descriptive accuracy, have received a more heroic and romantic name. For it is the first public law in which the State has explicitly recognised the principle that beauty in out of doors scenes is an asset which claims protection on broad grounds of national advantage. Few, perhaps, of the members of the House of Commons who, in the one critical division, voted in favour of the new legislation, were quite conscious of the fact that they were planting a novel germ in the ancient soil of British jurisprudence. That, after all, is quite in accordance with the genius of our Constitution. We are, in these islands, conservative by instinct; yet we are unceasingly adapting our institutions of government to altered conditions. The process is invariable. A few sensitive or presaging souls perceive that something is amiss; that tendencies are in being which, if allowed to work themselves out unchecked, will increasingly prejudice the common good. At first they cry aloud in the wilderness or whisper sadly in the streets. The rest of the easy-going English world, absorbed each one in his own business or preoccupied with other ideals, take no notice, or if now and then some listen, it is only to pay the tribute of a compassionate smile to the vain zeal of the visionaries. Little by little, however, possibly by the mere iteration of the preaching, attention is secured and, by-and-by, the handful of reformers find, somewhat to their surprise as well as their delight, that the vague force known as public opinion is on their side. There remains then only the difficulty of getting an effective hearing in Parliament and of adjusting the claims to consideration of the various interests which, in the absence of reasonable regulation, have grown up round the abuse.

In this broad outline I have sketched the history of the Act. It is the tardy outcome of efforts, small and great, made on an infinite number of converging lines. If it entered on its Parliamentary life under the high authority of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, it was finally nursed into the full dignity of statutory being by the

unwearying devotion of Mr. Hart-Davies. It seems ungrateful not to add the names of many others who, within and without the walls of St. Stephen's, smoothed the way. But space imposes its inexorable veto. Yet Mr. Herbert Samuel, as Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, must have one feeble word of thanks. Nor do we forget our obligations to our adversaries. If the Junior Member for the City of London had not opposed the Third Reading, we should not have known that feeling in the House of Commons was divided in the ratio of 207 to 12; and if he had not, by his solitary action, blocked the consideration of the Lords' Amendments, we should not have had the satisfaction of knowing that the Government assumed responsibility for the measure. In a wholly different spirit we are bound further to acknowledge the courtesy and loyal goodwill with which the Association representing the interests of the Billposting and Allied Trades, adhered to the terms of the Concordat. For it must be clearly understood, that the Bill, as introduced and finally passed, does not go as far as we could wish or even as far as the House of Commons desired. It registers a compromise arrived at after difficult though friendly negotiations.

In this preliminary flourish of trumpets I do homage to the *Zeitgeist*. We who have, for a score of cheerless years, sought in one way or another to stay the tide of disfigurement, believe that we have been the means of rendering a signal service to the cause of civilisation. It is no doubt due to the study which, incidentally, I have been forced to make of the morbid physiology of advertising, that I think it useful to set down this claim of ours in the most uncompromising terms. Yet I think I may add that our appeal has been from first to last to calm reason and temperate goodwill. What has been achieved through us would, we doubt not, have been achieved at some other time, and in some other way, under the sheer compulsion of enlightened common sense. Nor do we need to be told that our work is only now beginning. Henceforth, representative public bodies—County Councils or Corporations or Borough Councils—are empowered to frame bye-laws under which they can forbid the display of any 'advertisement' which affects prejudicially the beauty of landscape or the amenities of a public park or pleasure promenade. A period of grace is necessarily allowed for existing structures. But, to indicate the scope of the law by an illustration which will appeal at once to the heart of the wayfarer, no new field-boards can, if the local authority

is alive to its duty in this particular, be set up to vex his soul. Cities, towns, and—alas ! that I should have to own my fear—perhaps even villages, do not come within the range of absolute relief. But where there is a *rus in urbe*, it may be protected, while by another provision, hoarding display of abnormal height can be prohibited.

It is, after all, no intolerable price to pay for the establishment of a great principle, to assent to the imposition of limits on its immediate application. The sphere of control is narrow, and even within that narrow sphere the powers conferred may not at first be largely brought into play. But it is sufficient to know that there is scope enough for fruitful effort. Each instance in which Nature is saved from gross defacement will—what shall I say?—popularise the notion that the Common Round of the citizen need not be made gratuitously unsightly.

Public opinion, operating through municipal authorities, is the ultimate force. Now Mr. Arthur Balfour has told us—I am glad to throw the responsibility of the dictum on his broad, philosophic shoulders—that most people take their opinion of what is permissible from their observation of the things permitted. The average man yesterday took it for granted that any person who wanted to get custom for his wares had an unchallengeable right to affront the eyes of his unoffending fellows. If he stopped to ask himself why he thought so, he would find his sole reason in the circumstance that he found the eyesores were, in fact, tolerated wherever he went. But to-morrow this same average man will become aware that a limit has been set to the privilege of molesting the wayfarer. He will then assure himself that he for his part (such is the subtle flattery that we all are ready to pay to our intelligence) had always thought and said that there should be a law against such abominations. I do not suggest that the average man learns everything or recasts his convictions within twenty-four hours ; but just as the application of the new powers extends, will be the corresponding alteration in the bent of popular sentiment. The Act, in short, is valued by its promoters not so much for the substantial relief it offers—though that is considerable—as because it alters the atmosphere in which henceforth the struggle for a fairer and more worthy outlook, in town and country, has to be maintained.

The propagandist habit, once contracted, is incurable, and I find I have been writing a pamphlet when I ought, I suppose, to

have composed a prose idyll in praise of the serenities of Nature, and hurled dithyrambic reproach at the heads of the pushing tradesmen who profane the sanctities. Yet I am not sure that I am properly penitent. For I may hope, in the CORNHILL MAGAZINE, to be preaching to those who are already converted. In my judgment the purest poetry lies, for our purpose, in earnest discharge of the homely duties of a citizen. The inspiration that will prompt the lovers of beauty to take the simple practical steps that are now within their reach to vindicate its place in the scheme of modern life, is for me the indispensable gift. Genius, in the department of applied æsthetics, lies in the capacity for taking infinite pains to make the people familiar with and expectant of grace in small things as in great, in the crowded thoroughfare as well as in the woodland and on the mountain top. We have to fit them to see, while we create or preserve, all that ministers to the taste which we seek to foster. Our mission, if we conceive it rightly, is one of humanity, of religion, of education, and touches upon many a remote issue of our complex social system. Civilisation must be so moulded as to emancipate itself from evils, not of its essence, which have grown with its growth. Individualism has to be saved from failure by keeping steadily in view the needs of collective well-being. Industry and commerce must become conscious of their own dignity and recognise that goodliness of aspect in the visible world is as truly wealth as commodities that can be purchased over the counter or services for which wages are earned and paid. The things that cost nothing are, after all, the things of highest value. To those who have got into the way of thinking only in terms of money this may appear a fantastic paradox. But those who consider what the end of human effort is will see in it simply a neglected truism. I am not one of those who brand the desire of profit as 'greed,' or sneer at 'competition' as if it were the poison of a State. I refuse absolutely to admit any distinction between what is called sentiment and utility. The highest utility lies in the gratification of the finest sentiment. To promote happiness is the ultimate test; and of all the joys of life there is none, I say it boldly, more widely appreciated than that afforded by fairness and freshness in out of door scenes. We may now pass without any sense of abrupt descent, from these philosophic heights to the level plain of the 'Advertisements Regulation Act.'

When the traveller finds himself in some such threatened

paradise as that in which I write these lines, when he wanders among the cromlechs and cliff-castles which still remain in lonely majesty along the mystic coast of Dewisland ; when he watches the rocky headlands and peaceful bays still bathed in the sunset glow just as they were in the days when St. David ruled his little kingdom by the might of primitive holiness ; when he follows the pilgrim tracks to that marvellous group of ecclesiastical buildings which preserve still to the men of to-day the living record of medieval art ; when he sees all round the white homesteads which stud the windswept upland or nestle between the tiny volcanic sierras that break the plain ; when he contemplates the exquisite charm of the sparse trees and verdure in the little valleys which here and there furrow the bleak surface, well may he feel that here is a possession which we are blessed in having and which we owe it to our children's children to bequeath to them unimpaired. If he be a man gifted with a human heart, he will, doubtless, feel something more than concern when he finds that one of the sequestered bays has become the site of a new packet-station, and that already the slopes which give shelter in the hollow to bamboos and palms and giant aloes, and where all the garden flowers grow wild, have been scarred by the process of development, while rows of newly built houses line the heights. He will remember with misgiving how wistfully the burgesses of the city-village of St. David watch for the coming of the railway which is to rescue them from their romantic seclusion. Is our sentimental traveller to rail at civilisation ? to wring his hands helplessly ? to declaim against the brutal tendencies of a utilitarian age ? to prophesy (as he safely may) the advent of the soaps and pills and other familiar decorations of what are, with unconscious irony, called our pleasure resorts ? If he follows the precepts of my philosophy, he will do none of these things. The one fervent, prosaic emotion bred in him by the vision of what may be is a firm resolve that on his return to his home, he will devote himself, heart and soul, to the better ordering of his own parish. It is there, not in the lands of Old Romance that the battle for the finer taste, the more worthy ideal, has to be fought. He will consider that we have to educate our excursionists, and part of the process will be to use all his influence as a resident and as a voter to make his own municipal rulers vigilant guardians of the amenities, whatever they may be, of their district. If the suburban householder is to be (when holiday-time arrives) a judicious traveller, he must have

acquired the right instinct (for instincts are but the outcome of accumulated experience) in the daily round. Those who know what delight the seeing eye commands, are—I speak with some knowledge of men and things—more than others fired by enthusiasm for humanity. There is no divorce between taste and morals. If they have any failing, it is a certain distrust in the capacity of their fellows to drink at the spring of their own delight. I believe that their fear would change to faith if they accepted the propagation of Beautiful World principles as a necessary part of ethical teaching. We are concerned with the making of the future as well as with the contemplation of the past, and have to start on the inexpugnable basis of railways and turbine steamers and telegraph-posts. Our business is to fit these inventions (and others that are to come) into our plan for a pleasant world. There is even a romance in new creation; for history may be forecast as well as read, and runs in opposite directions from the fixed point of to-day. I am not sorry to see the beginnings of Fishguard Harbour, though I should have missed much if I had not stood on the sands which cover (so I like to think) the old Roman station of Menapia. The pressing need is to reconcile respect for the work of the engineer with regard for the passion of the antiquary and the sensibilities of the artist. There is no necessary incompatibility if it be once for all determined that, beyond the inevitable changes involved in satisfying the needs of a growing population, there shall be no superfluous intrusion of objects which minister to no real want and offend all wholesome taste. The areas of primitive and unspoilt charm must become narrower and narrower. It should be the aim of statesmanship (in the larger sense) to maintain the peace of what may be called the reserved tracts while conserving in the workaday world every possible element of grace and interest. No faculty is better worth development than that of perceiving the picturesqueness of the commonplace. Travel offers its occasional solaces to a privileged few; the great task is for each day in the life of fifty millions of busy men and women to render their environment not ignoble. 'If we can't be aisy, let us be as aisy as we can.' The Statute-book gives us, at last, a legal leverage for the exclusion of the grosser forms of wanton unsightliness. For myself I have confidence in the perceptions of our people. They may have tolerated artificial ugliness; but it is only because they had come to think that liability to ugliness was the law of the free Englishman's existence. Parliament, in its

wisdom, has condemned that doctrine. Henceforth, one is *prima facie* entitled to be in peace. The citizens of Reading, for example, can bring it to pass that the forest of puffing boards and sky-signs which mar the perfection of their riverside walks shall, five years hence, be swept away. By the exercise of a kindly diplomacy, the deliverance might indeed be attained at once. So, if I may pass at a bound to another distant example of the havoc wrought by the want of reasonable control, there is hope for the town of Como. When I was last there, the High Street (let me use the English word) had as its visual close a high hill glowing with verdure. On the centre of this green height the zeal of a brand-new hotel manager had installed a huge framework of letters which made the mountain a mere frame for the *affiche*. It dominated the southern end of the lake. I found everyone, from the archbishop to the hotel porter, ready to groan when I delicately hinted that the thing was an enormity. But 'What would you have? The syndicate are in possession.' Well, I hope that, just as a German precedent helped us, an English precedent will help Italians to save their treasures, and—this will appeal to the Tourist Traffic expert—to preserve the attractions for visitors.

But it is the beauty that lies at our door for which we should be most solicitous. Some years ago I came back one afternoon from summer wanderings in faery lands beyond the Alps and found myself at eventide in London Bridge Station. It was an auspicious moment, I thought, for visiting the Pool. A sunset as glorious as that of the Adriatic dwelt upon the river. The warehouses, the stately palaces, the shipping—but why try to catalogue the features of a scene such as an old Venetian would have loved? What pleased me most was the throng of East End dwellers who made the now traffickless bridge their summer promenade. Their delight in the simple beauty of the scene was unmistakable. Alas! their joy was short-lived. Suddenly flared forth from a huge wall at one end of the Bridge, flash after flash—a blazing sign. It was the product of a 'legitimate transaction,' no doubt. Someone who wanted to increase the sales of a comestible or a cosmetic had paid the owner of the space a certain sum for the privilege of torturing all these unoffending people to whom the Bridge was a midsummer's paradise. I can still see the look of pain in the face of a girl as she placed her hands before her eyes and turned away from the marred vision. She was only a factory hand, to be sure, and the man who had the villainous machinery of

defacement installed was possibly, at that moment, proudly treating his friends to the fine sunset which he had purchased with the other properties of his shooting-box in the Highlands. If he had deliberately wished to make trade competition hateful and despicable, could he have devised a more effectual way ?

Such a case as this does not come within the provision of the new law, unless indeed the courts hold, as I do, that the scenery of the River Thames between bridges is as much natural landscape as the stretch of the stream at Pangbourne. In each case, the hand of man has been busy ; but the loveliness is not his handiwork. It is Nature that gives the magic touch. This is a point for jurists to determine. Whatever the interpretation of the present text may be, of this we may be well assured, the Act will bring about its own extension to the full measure of the needs of a self-respecting nation.

RICHARDSON EVANS.

A STAFF RIDE IN THE VALLEY OF THE BOYNE.

To the soldier, a student of military history, the title of this article is at once suggestive of an absorbing phase of instruction in the science of war, and of the story of a battle which possesses peculiar interest by reason of its having been the first important tactical action fought by the nucleus of the present British standing army after its organisation in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

There is an added attraction in the fact that the valley in some respects, though of course on a much reduced scale, reproduces some of the features of Colenso and the Tugela River.

To the mind not versed in the meaning of technical military phrases, the term 'staff ride' is either nebulous or conveys the erroneous idea of a cheery party enjoying an exhilarating tour on horseback or in motors, and merely engaged in examining the topographical features of a countryside or in testing the hospitality of its inhabitants.

It may best be defined as an open-air *Kriegspiel* or war game, wherein, according to the strength and composition of the forces supposed to be engaged, a number of officers are detailed to discharge certain functions of command in the field under conditions which may be wholly imaginary or grafted on to the actual facts of a recorded campaign. The object aimed at is that of developing the consideration of the various strategic and tactical problems which those conditions would be likely to produce.

If the ride be based upon the actual facts of a recorded campaign, as in this case, it requires much preliminary study, and thus serves the dual purpose of stimulating the reading of military history and of exercising the mind in a consideration of the effect which the improvement in firearms has impressed upon tactics.

The one of which I write possessed this double feature. The study of William III.'s famous war and of the situation which he had to face in 1690 was undertaken last spring by a cavalry regiment quartered in Dublin,¹ this initial stage ending with a lecture upon the various sections of the expedition in general, and upon the battle of the Boyne in particular.

¹ The 11th (P.A.O.) Hussars, 3rd Cavalry Brigade.

Those who know the campaign will remember that it commenced in 1689. In that year Kirke, with his 'Lambs' of Tangier fame, accompanied also by the 9th Norfolks and the 11th Devons—I employ the modern titles—relieved the city of Derry; Inniskilling, or Enniskillen, withstood a harassing siege, and raised those famous regiments of horse and foot which still find an honoured place in our Army List; while shortly after these events the aged Duke Schomberg, who was afterwards killed at the Boyne and lies buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral, landed near Belfast with some 10,000 men, captured Carrickfergus, and opened the first strategic period of a three years' war.

Advancing south, with this force augmented by local reinforcements, Schomberg reached Dundalk, and after losing fifty per cent. of his men in the fatal fever-stricken camp near that town, broke up to winter quarters in the latter part of the same year.

In 1690 William III., with a reorganised and highly equipped army, resumed the advance southwards after a rapid concentration between Belfast and Newry.

James II., on William's advance, evacuated the easily defended ridges covering Newry and the hilly country protecting Dundalk, as he had done in the preceding year, retreated south and crossed the Boyne, and in a half-hearted way prepared to contest with his Orange son-in-law (who was now commanding a powerful force of some 40,000 men in round numbers, accompanied by a prodigious artillery train) the passage of the river, which covered and barred the roads to Dublin.

On Monday, June 30, 1690, William had passed beyond Ardee, and his father-in-law was south of the Boyne.

The special idea underlying this staff ride was the situation as it existed on this latter date.

Prior to departure for the scene of operations, officers were told off to act in various capacities. Majors became monarchs, captains ranked as generals of division or colonels of artillery brigades, and subalterns blossomed into regimental commanders; while to various ranks fell the all-important duties of arranging for transport, communication, commissariat, and other important services of an army in the field.

And over the whole problem lay the modifications or complications which science by the development of high explosives imposes on the modern soldier.

The northern commander, who, burly in figure and ruddy in

complexion, little resembled the Orange Prince of wide-thrown eye, aquiline nose, and asthma-drawn mouth, was directed to force the crossing of the river held by his brother officer; upon whom had been impressed the necessity of avoiding the pusillanimous attitude displayed by the unfortunate Jacobite; and to advance upon Dublin.

The country which was the scene of these operations is a peculiarly attractive one from the point of view of scenery. The river, as it wends its way on its slow journey to the sea, bends and twists in well-rounded curves, bordered with a deep hem of bulrush and wild iris.

On each bank lie gentle slopes studded with farmsteads, with here and there a well-timbered demesne interposed; while away in the distance, both north and south, the ground still rising offers to the eye a soft, undulating horizon line.

Ecclesiastical ruins remind the traveller of days long past; a great rath speaks of a bygone and a prehistoric age; the memories of St. Patrick and of the ancient days of Royal Meath come like a gentle breeze from the hill of Tara; but the stern grey obelisk in the valley commemorating the fateful July 1, 1690,¹ situated within a stone's throw of the still easily ascertained site of William III.'s camp, seems to him who travels to the valley and to him who dwells therein the great pivot round which most memories revolve.

Tradition has been hard at work along the banks in the two centuries which have passed since then, theories have developed into accepted record, and those ignorant of the details of the day, but professing local knowledge, will provide the student with many a well-flavoured hash of history.

'The first time King William kem here,' said an old inhabitant to me, 'he marched down the glen beyant, and, wid the Dutchmen batin' drums in front of him, tuk the water right forinst where we're sittin'. The second time he kem, mindful of his havin' been nigh drownded before be his horse stickin' in the soft bottom, he crossed below the mill, where there's a gran' bit of gravel; and another day he wint through the light wather above at Rosnaree.'

Accuracy mixed with inaccuracy! The old man knew the three fords which were used on the day of the battle: the one away on the left down the river by William III. with his cavalry force, consisting of the Bays, the Royals, the Inniskilling Dragoons, and the 3rd Hussars; and the other two at Oldbridge and Rosnaree,

¹ Now, by the added eleven days of the New Style, July 12

used respectively by the main attack and by that upon the Jacobite left ; but to him the Boyne and King William are terms so synonymous and so inseparable that three fords mean three royal visits.

After all, tradition is common to all ranks of life, and, as the Syrian guide declares, generally more accurate in its broad details among the poor than among the more wealthy. So it proves even here. Country houses boast of chairs where the King sat, of lawns where he lunched, and of beds wherein he slept. It is nothing to them that Story's¹ accurate record shows that the place lay too wide of his line of advance, or that he had a portable house erected in camp within which he always slept.² 'My dear sir,' said a local resident to me, 'I know that William III. slept at So-and-so's house. I have proof positive of it, for,' he added, with a fine rural disregard of logic, 'I have slept in the same bed myself.'

But if tradition has spun its covering web round the day and its memories, the careful narrative of this same story by the army chaplain who accompanied King William, and the excellent map which he appends to his work by way of explanation, coupled with a careful sifting of all local theory, enable one readily to grasp the events of the day and of the evening preceding. With a copy of the old map in the hand, every position and every detail can be identified. The river-bed may have altered a little, but the general features remain. The actual site of William's camp is as plain now as then, and so clear is the sketch in its outline that one can find out to within a few yards where this militant Churchman must have been sitting when engaged in his work of cartography.

At the foot of the ground whence he viewed the whole position there lies the main ford and the bridge ; Donore Hill, James II.'s post of observation, rises almost opposite ; away on the right, hidden from view, for it is some miles away, is the bridge of Slane, accurately indicated by the chaplain's map ; cleaving the sky upon the left, the new limestone spires and old grey battlements of the ancient and historic city of Drogheda ; almost at one's feet William's artillery position of the evening preceding the action ; facing it the Jacobite gun emplacements only a few hundred yards distant, yet out of range at that period ; within present-day snapshot rifle-range the post whence from the rushes the ricochetting six-

The historian of the period.

² There are, of course, cases of well authenticated visits by the King, apparently made in search of information.

pounder shot which nearly terminated William's career was fired ; while in the near distance rises the small group of hillocks where the Jacobite infantry was aligned, and where the determined Sarsfield argued with Lauzun, the very personification of all that is contemptible, or sought to instil the primary elements of tactics into the mind of the brave but incompetent Tyrconnell.

Times have moved quickly since those days. Steps which then were hopelessly wrong are now absolutely right ; certain immutable principles still remain immutable ; modern weapons have widened the area of conflict while retaining many of the governing tactical conditions which surround armies locked in the grip of battle ; modern science has contracted the distance which separates the directing commander from the forces which he handles. And so it is that the hill of Donore, the spot from whence James II. viewed the conflict, considered by critics of the day as too far in rear of his forces, was the very spot rightly selected by his imaginary representative upon this staff ride for his headquarters, for it was connected with every part of the field by telephones strung along the hedges, and by field communication lines running to artillery positions and to divisional and brigade commanders, science bridging space and placing the directing commander within a few seconds' speaking distance of every portion of his force.

But the immutable law of discovering the key of the position and of its attack and defence still remains. Then, as now, the frontal attack across river fords was an expensive form of battle tactics. In those days, more than two centuries ago, the strategic flank possessed its present-day importance, its attraction for the keen eye of the leader of cavalry ; yet over all lies the twentieth-century magnifying-glass of high explosives and long-range weapons, enlarging the picture and throwing the preliminary positions of the combatants to the edge of the map, to wider distances and more protected ground.

Reconnaissance revealed both to the attack and to the defence that the bridge of Slane upon the old Jacobite left was now, as then, the key of the position ; and the lesson of history, that both William and his antagonist, though they appreciated the fact, had yet neglected to take the necessary steps required, was forcibly impressed upon these latter-day students of the art of war.

The bridge reported by the 5th Dragoon Guards in 1690 as only lightly held was now protected on the south side by strong entrenchments lined with riflemen, murderous Maxims peeped here and

there through the trench face, making an advance against the bridge a step entailing terrible sacrifices. No need now for a modern Sir Neill O'Neill to fall—as he fell, devotedly leading—mortally wounded, charging at the head of James's Irish dragoons, for magazine rifle and pompom were where the Jacobite 'fuzileers' and cannon should have been, but where they were not. Nor would it have been so easy to cross the river ford lower down and outflank the bridge. The King James of to-day had occupied a strong tactical position on the northern side forward of his main defence, and covering the ford; the modern engineer had made that possible by providing him with safe retreat, if repulsed, by means of a bridge laid on Berthon boats.

And if the attack at the centre failed, and cavalry were urgently needed, the cry of 'Horse, horse!' which in repetition in 1690 became 'Halt, halt!' would not have had that retarding effect now, for even if the telephone line of to-day became interrupted there was still the messenger ready to carry the message on his motor-cycle swiftly to the requisite point.

The Duke of Berwick tells us that if after defeat the cavalry pursuit had been pressed round the Jacobite right rear, wholesale disaster must have resulted; and on this day the same unchanging truth was writ large in the dust of the roads which led to the supposed Jacobite camp at Duleek. There are certain spokes in the wheel of Time which need constant renewal; there are others which seem to gain strength as years roll on.

And as we stood at the close of the two days' study on the site of William's camp, marked out the old positions and the new, heard the story of 1690 and the dispositions of 1907, and were told by the respective latter-day commanders of the orders which they had given for the movements of their armies, the mind involuntarily turned to that hot July day of the seventeenth century when the crown of Great Britain and Ireland was to be the prize of victory; when Frenchmen fought in both armies, and the dull boom of the Dutch drum mingled with the guttural voice of the Netherlander and with the many-toned accents of the heterogeneous Williamite army; when the Irishman proved once again that the horsemanship of Art McMurrough Kavanagh was still an hereditary talent of the race, and when Sarsfield, with that keen instinct which enables the natural soldier quickly to recognise capacity to lead, remarked: 'Change kings, and we'll fight the battle over again.'

All grasped the severity of the task which had fallen to the Jacobite forces upon that eventful day, when outgunned, outnumbered, and untrained many a brave man gave his life for the cause he had embraced; none subscribed to that fiction of history which so often treats defeat as a term synonymous with cowardice.

Nor did it take a very vivid imagination to people those lanes and slopes with the predecessors of many a now famous regiment. The ear could almost catch the rumble of the slow-firing eighteen-pounder of that day as it rolled along the valley road, the mind could mark the difference between it and our new quick-firer of the same denomination; and as one looked at the knee-breeched, puttie-clad leg of the modern hussar, it almost recalled the short knicker and stocking of the seventeenth-century soldier.

As the ghosts of 1690 filed into camp past the group of the present, the grey of the original Inniskilling Dragoon seemed a not unfitting forerunner of the khaki of the soldier of to-day; yet the scarlet and gold, the coloured facing, wide-brimmed hat, and sweeping feather of the newly raised corps of William's army stood out rather glaringly to the eye.

And then one remembered that these brilliantly dressed spirits were the forerunners of regiments whose names are engraved on the pages of history, regiments who in all continents have earned fame and glory; soldiers whose brilliant tunics, though often honourably soiled with the brunt and smoke of battle and with the life-blood of the wearer, bear no other stains upon them.

Tramping noiselessly by were corps which have bequeathed to their heirs military such names as Minden, Ciudad Rodrigo, Albuhera, Egypt, Waterloo, India, Wagon Hill, and many others—names written in the indelible form in which brave men alone can write them.

And as we left the spot the great lesson was borne in upon our minds that war, though it is the outcome of the bitterest of man's passions, is yet a great science, replete not alone with important lessons of strategy and tactics, but affording in its study splendid examples of courage and of devotion to duty.

EDWARD MACARTNEY-FILGATE.

AT LARGE.¹BY ARTHUR C. BENSON.¹

VI.

SPECIALISM.

IT is a very curious thing to reflect how often an old platitude or axiom retains its vitality, long after the conditions which gave it birth have altered, and it no longer represents a truth. It would not matter if such platitudes only lived on dustily in vapid and ill-furnished minds, like the vases of milky-green opaque glass decorated with golden stars, that were the joy of Early Victorian chimney-pieces, and now hold spills in the second-best spare bedroom. But like the psalmist's enemies, platitudes live and are mighty. They remain, and, alas ! they have the force of arguments in the minds of sturdy unreflective men, who describe themselves as plain, straightforward people, and whose opinions carry weight in a community whose feelings are swayed by the statements of successful men rather than by the conclusions of reasonable men.

One of these pernicious platitudes is the statement that everyone ought to know something about everything and everything about something. It has a speciously epigrammatic air about it, dazzling enough to persuade the common-sense person that it is an intellectual judgment.

As a matter of fact, under present conditions, it represents an impossible and even undesirable ideal. A man who tried to know something about everything would end in knowing very little about anything ; and the most exhaustive programme that could be laid down for the most erudite of *savants* nowadays would be that he should know anything about anything, while the most resolute of specialists must be content with knowing something about something.

A well-informed friend told me, the other day, the name and date of a man who, he said, could be described as the last person who knew practically everything at his date that was worth

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knowing. I have forgotten both the name and the date and the friend who told me, but I believe that the learned man in question was a cardinal in the sixteenth century. At the present time, the problem of the accumulation of knowledge and the multiplication of books is a very serious one indeed. It is, however, morbid to allow it to trouble the mind. Like all insoluble problems, it will solve itself in a way so obvious that the people who solve it will wonder that anyone could ever have doubted what the solution would be, just as the problem of the depletion of the world's stock of coal will no doubt be solved in some perfectly simple fashion.

The dictum in question is generally quoted as an educational formula in favour of giving everyone what is called a sound general education. And it is probably one of the contributory causes which account for the present chaos of curricula. All subjects are held to be so important, and each subject is thought by its professors to be so peculiarly adapted for educational stimulus, that a resolute selection of subjects, which is the only remedy, is not attempted ; and accordingly the victim of educational theories is in the predicament of the man described by Dr. Johnson who could not make up his mind which leg of his breeches he would put his foot into first. Meanwhile, said the Doctor, with a directness of speech which requires to be palliated, the process of investigation is suspended.

But the practical result of the dilemma is the rise of specialism. The *savant* is dead and the specialist rules. It is interesting to try to trace the effect of this revolution upon our national culture.

Now, I have no desire whatever to take up the cudgels against the specialists : they are a harmless and necessary race, so long as they are aware of their limitations. But the tyranny of an oligarchy is the worst kind of tyranny, because it means the triumph of an average over individuals, whereas the worst that can be said of a despotism is that it is the triumph of an individual over an average. The tyranny of the specialistic oligarchy is making itself felt to-day, and I should like to fortify the revolutionary spirit of liberty, whose boast it is to detest tyranny in all its forms, whether it is the tyranny of an enlightened despot, or the tyranny of a virtuous oligarchy, or the tyranny of an intelligent democracy.

The first evil which results from the rule of the specialist is the destruction of the *amateur*. So real a fact is the tyranny of the specialist that the very word 'amateur,' which means a leisurely

lover of fine things, is beginning to be distorted into meaning an inefficient performer. As an instance of its correct and idiomatic use, I often think of the delightful landlord whom Stevenson encountered somewhere, and upon whom he pressed some Burgundy which he had with him. The generous host courteously refused a second glass, saying, 'You see I am an amateur of these things, and I am capable of leaving you not sufficient.' Now, I shall concern myself here principally with literature, because, in England at all events, literature plays the largest part in general culture. It may be said that we owe some of the best literature we have to amateurs. To contrast a few names, taken at random, Shakespeare, Dryden, Pope, Dr. Johnson, De Quincey, Tennyson, and Carlyle were professionals, it is true ; but, on the other hand, Milton, Gray, Boswell, Walter Scott, Charles Lamb, Shelley, Browning, and Ruskin were amateurs. It is not a question of how much a man writes or publishes, it is a question of the spirit in which a man writes. Walter Scott became a professional in the last years of his life, and for the noblest of reasons ; but he also became a bad writer. A good pair to contrast are Southey and Coleridge. They began as amateurs. Southey became a professional writer, and his sun set in the mists of valuable information. Coleridge, as an amateur, enriched the language with a few priceless poems, and then got involved in the morass of dialectical metaphysics. The point is whether a man writes simply because he cannot help it, or whether he writes to make an income. The latter motive does not by any means prevent his doing first-rate artistic work—indeed, there are certain persons who seem to have required the stimulus of necessity to make them break through an initial indolence of nature. When Johnson found fault with Gray for having times of the year when he wrote more easily, from the vernal to the autumnal equinox, he added that a man could write at any time if he set himself doggedly to it. True, no doubt ! But to write doggedly is not to court favourable conditions for artistic work. It may be a finer sight for a moralist to see a man performing an appointed task heavily and faithfully, with grim tenacity, than it is to see an artist in a frenzy of delight dashing down an overpowering impression of beauty ; but what has always hampered the British appreciation of literature is that we cannot disentangle the moral element from it : we are interested in morals, not in art, and we require a dash of optimistic piety in all writing that we propose to enjoy.

The real question is whether, if a man sets himself doggedly to work, the appetite comes with eating, and whether the caged bird begins to flutter its wings and to send out the song that it learnt in the green heart of the wood. When Byron said that easy writing made d—d hard reading, he meant that careless conception and hasty workmanship tend to blur the pattern and the colour of work. The fault of the amateur is that he can make the coat, but cannot be bothered to make it fit. But it is not by any means true that hard writing makes easy reading. The spirit of the amateur is the spirit of the lover, who trembles at the thought that the delicate creature he loves may learn to love him in return, if he can but praise her worthily. The professional spirit is the spirit in which a man carefully and courteously woos an elderly spinster for the sake of her comfortable fortune. The amateur has an irresponsible joy in his work ; he is like the golfer who dreams of mighty drives, and practises 'putting' on his back-lawn : the professional writer gives his solid hours to his work in a conscientious spirit, and is glad in hours of freedom to put the tiresome business away. Yet neither the amateur nor the professional can hope to capture the spirit of art by joy or faithfulness. It is a kind of divine felicity, when all is said and done, the kindly gift of God.

Now into this free wild world of art and literature and music comes the specialist and pegs out his claim, fencing out the amateur, who is essentially a rambler, from a hundred eligible situations. In literature this is particularly the case : the amateur is told by the historian that he must not intrude upon history ; that history is a science, and not a province of literature ; that the time has not come to draw any conclusions or to summarise any tendencies ; that picturesque narrative is an offence against the spirit of Truth ; that no one is as black or as white as he is painted ; and that to trifle with history is to commit a sin compounded of the sin of Ananias and Simon Magus. The amateur runs off, his hands over his ears, and henceforth hardly dares even to read history, to say nothing of writing it. Perhaps I draw too harsh a picture, but the truth is that I did, as a very young man, with no training except that provided by a sketchy knowledge of the classics, once attempt to write an historical biography. I shudder to think of my method and equipment ; I skipped the dull parts, I left all tiresome documents unread. It was a sad farrago of enthusiasm and levity and heady writing. But Jove's thunder rolled and the bolt fell.

A just man, whom I have never quite forgiven, to tell the truth, told me with unnecessary rigour and acrimony that I had made a pitiable exhibition of myself. But I have thanked God ever since, for I turned to literature pure and simple.

Then, too, it is the same with art-criticism ; here the amateur again, who, poor fool, is on the look-out for what is beautiful, is told that he must not meddle with art unless he does it seriously, which means that he must devote himself mainly to the study of inferior masterpieces, and schools, and tendencies. In literature it is the same ; he must not devote himself to reading and loving great books, he must disentangle influences ; he must discern the historical importance of writers, worthless in themselves, who form important links. In theology and in philosophy it is much the same : he must not read the Bible and say what he feels about it ; he must unravel Rabbinical and Talmudic tendencies ; he must acquaint himself with the heretical leanings of a certain era, and the shadow cast upon the page by apocryphal tradition. In philosophy he is still worse off, because he must plumb the depths of metaphysical jargon and master the criticism of methods.

Now, this is in a degree both right and necessary, because the blind must not attempt to lead the blind ; but it is treating the whole thing in too strictly scientific a spirit for all that. The misery of it is that the work of the specialist in all these regions tends to set a hedge about the law ; it tends to accumulate and perpetuate a vast amount of inferior work. The result of it is in literature, for instance, that an immense amount of second-rate and third-rate books go on being reprinted ; and instead of the principle of selection being applied to great authors, and their inferior writings being allowed to lapse into oblivion, they go on being reissued, not because they have any direct value for the human spirit, but because they have a scientific importance from the point of view of development. Yet for the ordinary human being it is far more important that he should read great masterpieces in a spirit of lively and enthusiastic sympathy than that he should wade into them through a mass of archaeological and philological detail. As a boy I used to have to prepare, on occasions, a play of Shakespeare for a holiday task. I have regarded certain plays with a kind of horror ever since, because one ended by learning up the introduction, which concerned itself with the origin of the play, and the notes which illustrated the meaning of such words as 'kerns and gallowglasses,' and left the action and

the poetry and the emotion of the play to take care of themselves. This was due partly to the blighting influence of examination-papers set by men of sterile, conscientious brains, but partly to the terrible value set by British minds upon correct information. The truth really is that if one begins by caring for a work of art, one also cares to understand the medium through which it is conveyed ; but if one begins by studying the medium first, one is apt to end by loathing the masterpiece, because of the dusty apparatus that it seems liable to collect about itself.

The result of the influence of the specialist upon literature is that the amateur, hustled from any region where the historical and scientific method can be applied, turns his attention to the field of pure imagination, where he cannot be interfered with. And this, I believe, is one of the reasons why *belles lettres* in the more precise sense tend to be deserted in favour of fiction. Sympathetic and imaginative criticism is so apt to be stamped upon by the erudite, who cry out so lamentably over errors and minute slips, that the novel seems to be the only safe vantage-ground in which the *littérateur* may disport himself.

But if the specialist is to the amateur what the hawk is to the dove, let us go further, and in a spirit of love, like Mr. Chadband, inquire what is the effect of specialism on the mind of the specialist. I have had the opportunity of meeting many specialists, and I say unhesitatingly that the effect largely depends upon the natural temperament of the individual. As a general rule, the great specialist is a wise, kindly, humble, delightful man. He perceives that though he has spent his whole life upon a subject or a fraction of a subject, he knows hardly anything about it compared to what there is to know. The track of knowledge glimmers far ahead of him, rising and falling like a road over solitary downs. He knows that it will not be given to him to advance very far upon the path, and he half envies those who shall come after, to whom many things that are dark mysteries to himself will be clear and plain. But he sees, too, how the dim avenues of knowledge reach out in every direction, interlacing and combining, and when he contrasts the tiny powers of the most subtle brain with all the wide range of law—for the knowledge which is to be, not invented, but simply discovered, is all assuredly there, secret and complex as it seems—there is but little room for complacency or pride. Indeed, I think that a great *savant*, as a rule, feels that instead of being separated by his store of knowledge, as by a wide

space that he has crossed, from smaller minds, he is brought closer to the ignorant by the presence of the vast unknown. Instead of feeling that he has soared like a rocket away from the ground, he thinks of himself rather as a flower might think whose head was an inch or two higher than a great company of similar flowers ; he has perhaps a wider view ; he sees the bounding hedgerow, the distant line of hills, whereas the humbler flower sees little but a forest of stems and blooms, with the light falling dimly between. And a great *savant*, too, is far more ready to credit other people with a wider knowledge than they possess. It is the lesser kind of *savant*, the man of one book, of one province, of one period, who is inclined to think that he is differentiated from the crowd. The great man is far too much preoccupied with real progress to waste time and energy in showing up the mistakes of others. It is the lesser kind of *savant*, jealous of his own reputation, anxious to show his superiority, who loves to censure and deride the feebler brother. If one ever sees a relentless and pitiless review of a book—an exposure, as it is called, by one specialist of another's work—one may be fairly certain that the critic is a minute kind of person. Again, the great specialist is never anxious to obtrude his subject ; he is rather anxious to hear what is going on in other regions of mental activity, regions which he would like to explore but cannot. It is the lesser light that desires to dazzle and bewilder his company, to tyrannise, to show off. It is the most difficult thing to get a great *savant* to talk about his subject, though, if he is kind and patient, will answer unintelligent questions, and help a feeble mind along, it is one of the most delightful things in the world. I seized the opportunity some little while ago, on finding myself sitting next to a great physicist, of asking him a series of fumbling questions on the subject of modern theories of matter ; for an hour I stumbled like a child, supported by a strong hand, in a dim and unfamiliar world, among the mysterious essences of things. I should like to try to reproduce it here, but I have no doubt I should reproduce it all wrong. Still, it was deeply inspiring to look out into chaos, to hear the rush and motion of atoms, moving in vast vortices, to learn that inside the hardest and most impenetrable of substances there was probably a feverish intensity of inner motion. I do not know that I acquired any precise knowledge, but I drank deep draughts of wonder and awe. The great man, with his amused and weary smile, was infinitely gentle, and left me, I will say, far more conscious of the beauty and the holiness of knowledge. I said

something to him about the sense of power that such knowledge must give. 'Ah!' he said, 'much of what I have told you is not proved, it is only suspected. We are very much in the dark about these things yet. Probably if a physicist of a hundred years hence could overhear me, he would be amazed to think that a sensible man could make such puerile statements. Power—no, it is not that! It rather makes one realise one's feebleness in being so uncertain about things that are absolutely certain and precise in themselves, if we could but see the truth. It is much more like the apostle who said, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." The thing one wonders at is the courage of the men who dare to think they *know*.'

In one region I own that I dread and dislike the tyranny of the specialist, and that is the region of metaphysical and religious speculation. People who indulge themselves in this form of speculation are apt to be told by theologians and metaphysicians that they ought to acquaint themselves with the trend of theological and metaphysical criticism. It seems to me like telling people that they must not ascend mountains unless they are accompanied by guides, and have studied the history of previous ascents. 'Yes,' the professional says, 'that is just what I mean; it is mere foolhardiness to attempt these arduous places unless you know exactly what you are about.'

To that I reply that no one is bound to go up hills, but that everyone who reflects at all is confronted by religious and philosophical problems. We all have to live, and we are all more or less experts in life. When one considers the infinite importance to every human spirit of these problems, and when one further considers how very little theologians and philosophers have ever effected in the direction of enlightening us as to the object of life, the problem of pain and evil, the preservation of identity after death, the question of necessity and free-will, surely, to attempt to silence people on these matters because they have not had a technical training is nothing more than an attempt wilfully to suppress evidence on these points? The only way in which it may be possible to arrive at the solution of these things is to know how they appeal to and affect normal minds. I would rather hear the experience of a life-long sufferer on the problem of pain, or of a faithful lover on the mystery of love, or of a poet on the influence of natural beauty, or of an unselfish and humble saint on the question of faith in the unseen, than the evidence of the most subtle theologian or

metaphysician in the world.] Many of us, if we are specialists in nothing else, are specialists in life; we have arrived at a point of view; some particular aspect of things has come home to us with a special force; and what really enriches the hope and faith of the world is the experience of candid and sincere persons. The specialist has often had no time or opportunity to observe life; all he has observed is the thought of other secluded persons, persons whose view has been both narrow and conventional, because they have not had the opportunity of correcting their traditional pre-conceptions by life itself.

I call, with all the earnestness that I can muster, upon all intelligent, observant, speculative people, who have felt the problems of life weigh heavily upon them, not to be dismayed by the disapproval of technical students, but to come forward and tell us what conclusions they have formed. The work of the trained specialist is essentially, in religion and philosophy, a negative work. He can show us how erroneous beliefs which coloured the minds of men at certain ages and eras grew up. He can show us what can be disregarded, as being only the conventional belief of the time; he can indicate, for instance, how a false conception of supernatural interference with natural law grew up in an age when, for want of trained knowledge, facts seemed fortuitous occurrences which were really conditioned by natural laws. The poet and the idealist make and cast abroad the great vital ideas, which the specialist picks up and analyses. But we must not stop at analysis; we want positive progress as well. We want people to tell us, candidly and simply, how their own soul grew, how it cast off conventional beliefs, how it justified itself in being hopeful or the reverse. There never was a time when more freedom of thought and expression was conceded to the individual. A man is no longer socially banned for being heretical, schismatic, or liberal-minded. I want people to say frankly what real part spiritual agencies or religious ideas have played in their lives, whether such agencies and ideas have modified their conduct, or have been modified by their inclinations and habits. I long to know a thousand things about my fellow-men—how they bear pain, how they confront the prospect of death, the hopes by which they live, the fears that overshadow them, the stuff of their lives, the influence of their emotions. It has long been thought, and it is still thought by many narrow precisians, indelicate and egotistical to do this. And the result is that we

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can find in books all the things that do not matter, while the thoughts that are of deep and vital interest are withheld.

Such books as Montaigne's 'Essays,' Rousseau's 'Autobiography,' Mrs. Carlyle's 'Letters,' Mrs. Oliphant's 'Memoirs,' the 'Autobiography' of B. R. Haydon, to name but a few books that come into my mind, are the sort of books that I crave for, because they are books in which one sees right into the heart and soul of another. Men can confess to a book what they cannot confess to a friend. Why should it be necessary to veil this essence of humanity in the dreary melodrama, the trite incident of a novel or a play? Things in life do not happen as they happen in novels or plays. Oliver Twist, in real life, does not get accidentally adopted by his grandfather's oldest friend and commit his sole burglary in the house of his aunt. We do not want life to be transplanted into trim garden-plots: we want to see it at home, as it grows in all its native wildness, on the one hand; and to know the idea, the theory, the principle that underlie it on the other. How few of us there are who *make* our lives into anything! We accept our limitations, we drift with them, while we indignantly assert the freedom of the will. The best sermon in the world is to hear of one who has struggled with life, bent or trained it to his will, plucked or rejected its fruit, but all upon some principle. It matters little what we do; it matters enormously how we do it. Considering how much has been said, and sung, and written, and recorded, and prated, and imagined, it is strange to think how little is ever told us directly about life; we see it in glimpses and flashes, through half-open doors, or as one sees it from a train gliding into a great town, and looks into back-windows and yards sheltered from the street. We philosophise, most of us, about anything but life; and one of the reasons why published sermons have such vast sales is because, however clumsily and conventionally, it is with life that they try to deal.

This kind of specialising is not recognised as a technical form of it at all, and yet how far nearer and closer and more urgent it is for us than any other kind. I have a hope that we are at the beginning of an era of plain-speaking in these matters. Too often, with the literary standard of decorum which prevails, such self-revelations are brushed aside as morbid, introspective, egotistical. They are no more so than any other kind of investigation, for all investigation is conditioned by the personality of the investigator. All that is needed is that an observer of life should be

perfectly candid and sincere, that he should not speak in a spirit of vanity or self-glorification, that he should try to disentangle what are the real motives that make him act or refrain from acting.

As an instance of what I mean by confession of the frankest order, dealing in this case not only with literature but also with morality, let me take the sorrowful words which Ruskin wrote in his '*Præterita*,' as a wearied and saddened man, when there was no longer any need for him to pretend anything, or to involve any of his own thoughts or beliefs in any sort of disguise. He took up Shakespeare at Macugnaga, in 1840, and he asks why the loveliest of Shakespeare's plays should be 'all mixed and encumbered with languid and common work—to one's best hope spurious certainly, so far as original, idle and disgraceful—and all so inextricably and mysteriously that the writer himself is not only unknowable, but inconceivable; and his wisdom so useless, that at this time of being and speaking, among active and purposeful Englishmen, I know not one who shows a trace of ever having felt a passion of Shakespeare's, or learnt a lesson from him.'

That is of course the sad cry of one who is interested in life primarily, and in art only so far as it can minister to life. It may be strained and exaggerated, but how far more vital a saying than to expand in vobule and vapid enthusiasm over the insight and nobleness of Shakespeare, if one has not really felt one's life modified by that mysterious mind.

Of course such self-revelation as I speak of will necessarily fall into the hands of unquiet, dissatisfied, melancholy people. If life is a commonplace and pleasant sort of business, there is nothing particular to say or to think about it. But for all those—and they are many—who feel that life misses, by some blind, inevitable movement, being the gracious and beautiful thing it seems framed to be, how can such as these hold their peace? And how, except by facing it all, and looking patiently and bravely at it, can we find a remedy for its sore sicknesses? That method has been used, and used with success in every other kind of investigation, and we must investigate life too, even if it turns out to be all a kind of Mendelism, moved and swayed by absolutely fixed laws, which take no account of what we sorrowfully desire.

Let us, then, gather up our threads a little. Let us first confront the fact that, under present conditions, in the face of the mass of records and books and accumulated traditions, arts and sciences must make progress little by little, line by line, in skilled technical

hands. Fine achievement in every region becomes more difficult every day, because there is so much that is finished and perfected behind us ; and if the conditions of our lives call us to some strictly limited path, let us advance wisely and humbly, step by step, without pride or vanity. But let us not forget, in the face of the frigidities of knowledge, that if they are the mechanism of life, emotion and hope and love and admiration are the steam. Knowledge is only valuable in so far as it makes the force of life effective and vigorous. And thus if we have breasted the strange current of life, or even if we have been ourselves overpowered and swept away by it, let us try, in whatever region we have the power, to let that experience have some value for ourselves and others. If we can say it or write it, so much the better. There are thousands of people moving through the world who are wearied and bewildered, and who are looking out for any message of hope and joy that may give them courage to struggle on ; but if we cannot do that, we can at least live life temperately and cheerfully and sincerely : if we have bungled, if we have slipped, we can do something to help others not to go light-heartedly down the miry path ; we can raise them up if they have fallen, we can cleanse the stains, or we can at least give them the comfort of feeling that they are not sadly and insupportably alone.

WROTH.¹

BY AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE.

CHAPTER XII.

SIR THOMAS HOLROYD returned in high feather from his self-imposed task of town-crier to superintend the preparation of the wedding breakfast. The joke had been to him, thus far, undiluted in its humour ; and it would not be his fault if it did not end on the highest note of hilarity. The bridegroom's savage temper, Martin-dale's dudgeon, were but spice added to the savour of the dish ; and the fruitlessness of his own recent prank seemed nearly as comic as success.

‘Gad, Scaife,’ he cried, flinging himself into a chair and running his eye down the laden table with its ten seats, ‘it’s the richest thing ! The ladies won’t come, ecod ! The fat widow waddled at me with a besom out of a hardware shop ! ‘Pon honour—a hardware shop !—She’s had enough of our games, she swears. Gad ! she’d have beaten me for Wroth, only she’s too fat, she couldn’t run ! As for the country wench, I met her being carted home by a round farmer like a calf to the butcher. She was whimpering, and the fellow had her by the ear. “Breakfast ?” he says, as I stopped his cart to deliver my polite invitation, “I’ll break your fast !” He clubbed his whip—I had to take to my heels again. Ecod ! what a set of aspirants, what a testimony to Wroth’s attraction !’

‘Then we may take it that two will fail at least !’ said Scaife the methodical, with a glance at the chairs.

‘Two ? You may take it they’ll all fail. As for the black dummy—bailiff, or ghost of old crime, or whatever it was—there was no sign of her about. The old maid might have come, I’ll swear—she was mincing up and down the Pantiles, but she’s too damned genteel, and “Fie, sir,” she says, shaking her curls at me, as I went up to her with my best bow, “I’ll not believe you, sir,”

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she says. "Lord Wroth is a perfect gentleman, and it would never be his purpose to taunt ill-fortune." Yet her eyes were eager, poor old tabby !'

"By George ! What a Bo-peep," said Scaife, with his saturnine chuckle.

"Why don't you follow her up and do the peeping ?" cried Sir Thomas, and exploded at his own wit.

"Why, then, who is left ? Cyprian young lady ?"

"Cyprian ! Cyprian's overcome. She's toasted the bridal pair already. I saw her in the arms of the constable."

"Tut, tut—and he the guardian of morality at the Wells !"

"In short, our breakfast will be the primest thing in dismal," Sir Thomas broke forth again. "A row of empty chairs. And, gad ! look at Martindale's face there ! Cheer up, man, you should bless the stars instead of cursing them."

Martindale rolled his blue eyes arrogantly upon the voluble speaker.

"Speak plain, Tom."

"Why, dash my buttons, you've only had up to this an easy conquest with a little comedy actress, but now you'll have a devil of a fine game with my Lady Wroth ! Pah ! Is there no spirit in you, man ?"

A gleam came into the blue eyes.

"Tom," said Martindale, after a musing spell, "Tom, now and again (by accident) you show a smattering of sense."

He tilted back his head and laughed. Sir Thomas rose and slapped him on the back.

"So long as Wroth gives you the chance of a little sport, eh ? What do you bet he cuts the whole concern and never turns up at all ? He had a devil of a wild look, steeple-chasing over the graves out there."

"Then I vote we toss for first start in the consolation stakes," put in the solemn voice of Mr. Scaife.

"Scaife," retorted Martindale, in a sudden blaze, "I've the prior claim ! I'll have no tossing and no interference."

The two young men faced each other threateningly, while Holroyd shrieked with laughter. Here it was that Wroth himself dashed into the room.

"What a confounded ugly noise, Tom," he cried irritably. "Hang it, what a monstrous table ! And pah ! what a smell of meat ! Get me a glass of champagne, Martindale, there's a good

lad. Well, what the devil—where are the other fools? When is this confounded breakfast going to begin? I'll keep my word, of course, but let's have it over, for God's sake! Where's my bride? Aha, hang it! where's my Lady Wroth?

There was a rustle of silk in the passage. The astounded waiter of the Crown knocked at the half-open door.

'Don't announce me,' said a high-pitched voice.

'Talk of an angel,' said Holroyd, with his laugh.

'Talk of the devil,' muttered Martindale.

'May I enter?' chanted Peggy from the threshold, a vision of dove colour and iridescent sheen, of red cheeks and impudent lips, of copper curls and challenging eyes.

'Come in . . . Lady Wroth!' said the bridegroom, in a low tone.

He bowed profoundly, looked at her slowly from head to foot, and then extended his hand. As she laid hers in it she was struck by its icy touch and the tremor that ran through it. And she cried in her vain heart:

'He thinks me his wife, he has already succumbed. I should have had triumph, triumph!'

Then into the eager, foolish brain shot the thought, greatly daring: 'Play the game while it lasts, Peggy, my girl!'

'Is your lordship quite sure that I am now Lady Wroth?' she asked, mellifluously.

'As sure as I am of damnation,' said Wroth between his teeth, dropping his hand from hers as she sank, with the trained actress' deliberation, into the chair he indicated.

'It all seems so strange, you know,' said she innocently, with the thrill in her voice which she deemed so effective.

'Believe it, my fair bride, oh, believe it!' retorted he. 'Faith is a fine virtue, and, by the Lord, it is borne in on me that your ladyship will want it on the subject of marriage with my unworthy self. But,' he bared his teeth in an unmirthful laugh, 'Mr. Minchin is warrant for the actuality of our union. And that should be monstrous consoling—were you tempted to doubt it, my lady. Martindale, take the other side of . . . Lady Wroth. What the devil, are we never to have this breakfast? Where is the wine, where are the servants? Tom, you always were an incapable ass with your giggling—and, confusion, man! what do you mean by that row of empty chairs?'

'The fact is, George, your wedding feast is not popular, at the Wells,' cried Tom, hanging on to the bell-rope. 'No, it's not

popular, that's flat ! None of the other pretty ones of this morning will come to it.'

'I crave ten thousand pardons, my dear,' said Wroth, turning upon Peggy ; 'you see, it is not my fault, if I have failed, after all, to secure suitable guests to honour you.'

'So long as you have each other,' drawled Scaife across the table.

'So long as we have each other !' repeated Wroth, with ironic emphasis.

Peggy could take amusement out of a situation in which she was playing not the part of dupe but that of deceiver. Her full lips parted upon a sudden spontaneous laugh, curiously in contrast with her previous artificiality. Peggy Vaughan had the voice and laugh of a child, when she forgot to be Miss Beljoy, of Drury Lane.

Martindale flushed to the roots of his hair.

'The dog is insulting you,' he whispered in her ear, 'say but the word, and I'll call him out, Peg.'

The girl's astute green eyes moved critically from her lover to her supposed husband, and back again. The aspirations of Miss Beljoy were no longer those of Peggy Vaughan. Martindale was a nice boy ; quite amusing when nobody better was to be had ; sufficiently in the fashion also to form a very respectable stop-gap. But this other, with his livid handsome face, with the glittering aversion in his eyes, with his ruddy hair, clustering round his head after a fashion that appealed even to her ignorant taste ; this man, with scorn and anger concentrated in every movement, with his eccentricity, his evil repute, his insolent treatment of women, was a man—a man, she thought, worth striving for, worth winning. The laugh died on her lips.

'Will your lordship give me a little wine,' she murmured, and reached her left hand lazily for her glass. He glanced at the fingers that clasped the stem.

'I congratulate you upon your good sense,' he said, as he tilted the foam into the long goblet.

'My good sense ?'

'Your quick wit, if you prefer that.'

'My lord — ?'

'Nay, then,' he flung himself impatiently backward. 'I congratulate myself upon Mr. Minchin's exactitude in carrying out my instructions.'

The colour flickered in the hectic bloom of her face.

'My good sense don't seem to be much use to me here,' she retorted sharply. 'As to my quick wits—give my quick wits another chance.'

He tapped her left hand meaningly. She flushed again at his touch and looked down. Then she understood.

'Your lordship alludes to my wedding ring?' she said coolly enough, though she trembled a little at the thought of the coming disclosure.

'It hung, in truth, very loose,' said he. He had tossed down his glassful, and there was more animation in his manner, less lassitude, less disgust.

'Indeed, my lord,' she said boldly, 'loose enough, but when your lordship pleases to tighten it, it shall on again.'

He gave her a dark look.

'Aye,' he said, 'wait for that, my lady, wait for that! Or, is it possible,' pursued he then, brutally, 'that the punctilious Minchin has failed in explicitness? Have you not understood that we are to set a matrimonial fashion? Nay, I am sure the idea should appeal to anyone with a grain of originality; instead of the commonplace, everyday jog home together, it is to be, you know, each our way, gloriously free. And the further from each other, why, the better! Though twenty miles is your limit, by our contract, madam, I feel sure your soaring spirit will carry you to much vaster distances—and I rejoice in the thought.'

Peggy, her chin on her hand, stared at him and clenched her teeth upon the rage that surged within her. Had she been in reality his wife, how she would have paid him out for this! Yet he still believed he had married her, and therefore was the outrage no less aimed at her. But she knew herself, knew that Peggy in a rage forgot to be Miss Beljoy, that by giving way she would lose both looks and manners and the words of gall that rose to her lips were thrust down by an effort that almost turned her sick. She sat silent.

The servants were now moving about them. Holroyd and Scaife—the one in his uproarious fashion, the other in his dry way, were rising to what they conceived to be the spirit of the situation by freakish pantomime to empty chairs and exchange of pleasantries to each other. Martindale, with a bottle before him, was working himself to irresistible ardour, waiting for his moment.

Suddenly, Wroth's laugh rang out again. His black temper

was merging into one of those moods of recklessness, usually hailed by his friends as prelude to his maddest and most diverting follies. He caught Peggy's hand :

'I vow, without the ring, it is quite squeezable,' he cried.

'But your lordship's fingers are still very cold.'

'A pity, my dear, that now, alas! it is never your fair hand will warm them!'

'Does your lordship indeed find no warmth in it?'

He withdrew his touch with a jerk.

'If I did,' he said, 'it would be hell. Zounds, are you not my wife?'

'A toast, a toast!' cried Holroyd. 'The best man rises to propose the bride : Ladies and gentlemen, or rather, gentlemen, Wroth would have us believe that we all witnessed the growth of this romance. If this be true, I can assert that rarely has marriage better substantiated the poet's saying : "He never loved at all, who loved not at first sight!"' The bride, I will make bold to say, indeed—women are so clever!—must have forestalled the event. We may take it, gentlemen, that she must have loved the ardent bridegroom even before she ever saw him. But, how justified was she! She came, she saw, she conquered! . . . May we not prognosticate the complete happiness of a wooing that has been so short a-doing? Gentlemen, my brain reels, words fail before the glowing vision. Scaife, you dog, stop pulling at my coat-tail. If to us, wretched bachelors, nothing is left but envy, but despair—hey, Martindale?—let us drown these miserable feelings in the convivial cup, let us—'

He fell suddenly into his seat, dragged down by the united clutch of Martindale and Scaife. His eloquence was smothered in their shouts and laughter. But the bridegroom's voice was silent. As the words, 'love at first sight,' struck his ear, the cloud of his previous humour descended upon him in visible gloom. And, as now fresh cries that might have emanated from twenty throats instead of three, called upon him to return thanks for the bride, he rose slowly and cast a glance around him that withered even that company into silence, that filled Peggy with a sudden vague terror of the unknown forces with which she had set herself so irresponsibly to play.

CHAPTER XIII.

JULIANA, returning to the hotel, had passed unnoticed to her room and locked herself in. Solitude had been all her desire. She sat wrestling with herself, now almost tempted to fly from the immeasurable responsibility she had undertaken, now rehearsing in what words, at what moment she would reveal her identity to the new-made husband. What if she found that from the beginning she had been mistaken, that she had based her confidence upon the airy fabric of a dream, that the hour of their first meeting which she had thought the golden epoch of both their lives had been to him but the freak of the moment—worse still, but the delusion of a scarcely sober brain? What if he preferred this Beljoy—wanted this Beljoy?

Then reason would rise again upon the opposite side. Whatever the cause that had plunged him into this extraordinary union, his attitude at the church had been that of one who had a frenzy of distaste for the deed he was committing. Moreover, she knew Peggy, knew the existence he must lead, were he mated to that creature of profaned affections, of evil impulses, of most faithless heart—he, the man whom she had met on the heights, who had not even touched her hand.

Shouts of laughter—the note of a high hilarious voice—echoed to her from the banquet room below. She shuddered and hid her face. Flight again seemed to beckon to her. The innocent fragrance and beauty of her gardens at Montemuscoli, the fair white silences of the marble-cased rooms of her Florentine abode, seemed to call. She could still leave all this day's folly behind, like an evil dream, fling herself back into solitude, withdraw from the contamination into which she was deliberately about to steep herself.

In spite of the lawyer's asseverations she believed that such a marriage could easily be annulled should she or Wroth demand it. . . . This marriage could be annulled! Then a sudden clenching of her hands brought the unfamiliar sensation of the loose, heavy ring. She sat staring at it. Symbol of a vow most solemnly undertaken. . . . 'for better for worse, till death do us part . . . !' His signet ring with the crest of Wroth—the wolf's head erased—and the motto, 'Ruthless.' Like a flash of lightning she saw her duty, saw what she had taken upon herself, what she

must bear. She flung herself on her knees beside the bed and prayed a quick and passionate prayer. Then she unbolted the door and called for Panton :

‘ My purple velvet cloak—you remember, I told you to pack it ? and my scarf ! Bring them quickly.’

‘ My lady ! ’ stammered poor, fat, bewildered Panton, ‘ with your mourning ? ’

‘ Bring it quickly,’ repeated Juliana.

She stood waiting, tapping her foot till the woman returned, flushed from her skirmish in the trunk, carrying the garment.

Juliana clasped the velvet about her. He would remember, he must remember : thus had she been garbed upon that night of revelation. Motioning back her maid, she went forth alone into the passage and down the stairs.

Before she reached the last step a thought struck her ; and she paused upon its hideous suggestion. Peggy had forestalled her at the feast. Her secret was doubtless already betrayed—and how ! Into what depth of humiliation was she not bringing her proud soul ! But it was the final weakness : she shook it from her and proceeded to meet fate.

Two waiters stood outside the banquet room, one of whom was holding the door slightly open. Both the eavesdroppers were grinning. Inside, all the noisy clamour that had penetrated even to Juliana upstairs, had now given place to the ring of one voice. Wroth was speaking. His accents resounded, harsh, arrogant, in brief sentences that fell like the cuts of a whip, each flung out to sting, to lash.

The servants, abashed, made way and disappeared. Juliana pushed the door and halted on the threshold, unperceived. Wroth was standing with his back to her, one hand on the table ; his guests sat as if spellbound, each face of them a study in amazement.

‘ And so,’ the bridegroom was saying, ‘ I thank you all, my good friends, my dear friends. Miss Beljoy—I beg her pardon, my Lady Wroth—has graced her *rôle* to-day to the full as artistically as any she has undertaken on the boards of Thespis. I trust you noted, gentlemen, the exquisite reserve of a bride who did not permit so much as the tip of her chin to be visible in those sacred precincts where she whispered her vows—and yet it is quite a pretty chin, as you may all see for yourselves, now. And my Lady Wroth has further shown you that she can toss a bumper and crack a

joke, and roll an eye with the best of you, at the fitting hour and place, in due season . . . I declare, when I look at her, boys, I almost wish I had not married her, for, by my soul, there's something about the minx that might have pleased me . . . were she not my wife. But a wife? As soon expect a man to find charm in the neat twist of the halter that is about to hoist him aloft—A wife! . . . Marriage! Invention of some aged hags, jealous of youth and beauty, to make a sparkling wench as odious and tedious as themselves! Who would want to kiss a lip, gentlemen, when dull duvy, not a delicate inspiration, bids? Pah! 'Tis yesterday's champagne! Who would want to clasp a waist chained like a convict's to your side for life? Matrimony—the coffin of love! The fairest would lie in it, for me, as a rotting corpse. Cover it up! Take it away! Forget it! The fairer she was, the more it sickens me to look at her now. Had she been dear, she would be ten times hateful. No woman could stand the test; no beauty is strong enough, no wit bright enough, no charm sweet enough, no beloved loved enough! You want me to reply to your toast, to drink to matrimony? Gentlemen, I'll drink to freedom, I'll drink to the gold-bags secured at so devilish a price, but which you and I will spend so jovially! We'll spend them all, you shall spend them, I'll spend them! Lift glasses, we'll drink and drink again oblivion to marriage and hey for freedom and money!'

Indescribable was the bitterness with which Wroth poured out his fantastic tirade; indescribable the passion of his resentment against the bonds which it seemed almost he felt physically shackling him. For while he spoke now and again he seemed to be plucking at invisible fetters; and, at the climax it was as though he flung them from him in the face of her whom he addressed as his wife.

Peggy, who at the outset had flushed and winced, then shown bewilderment, confusion, anger and shame almost to tears, had suddenly, in the very middle of his speech, altered her demeanour. She had caught a glimpse, in the mirror opposite, of a milk-white, stricken face framed in the blackness of the doorway. Instantly the arrows apparently aimed at her, flew by, to reach a truer goal. The insult was for Juliana! The humiliation for Juliana! For Peggy, rich amusement and sweeter revenge!

As Wroth halted breathless, his hand on a brimming glass, he caught sight of the girl's wide, impudent grin, and instinctively followed the direction of her fixed glance. Instantly the glass

fell from his hand. He stared into the mirror as if at a supernatural apparition.

But a general movement of curiosity towards the door made him turn his head, and, for the space of a breath, Wroth and Juliana looked again upon each other. Then Peggy's laugh broke the spell. The next instant Juliana was gone, so swiftly and so softly that none could have arrested her flight. The door closed upon her.

'Zounds ! who is the goddess ? ' cried Sir Thomas, excitedly.

Peggy's lips hesitated on the brink of a startling announcement ; then she flung a look at the bridegroom's face, and in a second the whole plan of action was altered in her irresponsible mind. Quick as women are to read each other's souls, she had read farewell in Juliana's eyes. The secret meant power to the supposed Lady Wroth, if it meant nothing else. It should be kept.

'Don't you know ? ' she cried gaily, ' have you not recognised her ? Why, that's one of the rejected—the black dummy ! '

Wroth gave a cry like the sob of some wild beast in a trap. He dashed the chair from his way and leaped to the door ; the room shook with the violence with which he wrenched it open and flung it behind him.

'Your ladyship has an agreeable life before you,' said Scaife drily.

Peggy sent her insolent eyes round the three faces to let them rest upon Martindale's.

'Perhaps,' she said, with a little secret sounding laugh.

Wroth had dashed into the hall, to find it empty. He stood a second, hesitating between the stairs on one side and the half-closed street door on the other ; then two strides took him into the open. In front rose the gorse-clad hilly common of Mount Ephraim, at that moment quite deserted ; but between the moving groups that studded the pavement below he thought to catch the flutter of a black scarf, which, even as he saw it, disappeared into one of the passages leading to the Pantiles. Instantly he started in pursuit. It was a long chase, for when he reached the parade, the black scarf had vanished again—obviously into a shop—and he lost much time in tracking it, only to end in finding that it dangled from the hat of one whom he had never before seen. Baffled, panting, he hastened back to the Crown, scornful of the curiosity

and amusement that his bareheaded passage excited among the strollers, and rushed to knock at the closed window of the office.

‘The lady—the lady in black?’ he thundered as the glass was lifted. ‘Pshaw, don’t stare like that!—Is there not a foreign lady staying in this hotel? I know there is. Come, give me the book. I’ll see for myself.’

He snatched the greasy volume that lay on the ledge before him, even as the alarmed landlady, with hesitating hands, sought to withdraw it from his reach. It opened of itself at the last used page.

Wroth gave a half-stifled cry of triumph. In elaborate copper-plate handwriting—Annibale, Juliana’s courier was vain of his superior education—stood the pompous inscription: ‘Contessa Mordante di Belgiojoso dei Vespi—Palazzo Mordante, Florence.’ Thereafter a less artistic pen had entered the additional remark: ‘with maid and man-servant, arrived April 24th,’ together with the record of the apartments allotted to so distinguished a visitor ‘Prince George, bedroom—Princess Sophia, sitting-room. Seringapatam and Bangalore, for attendants.’

Wroth drew a deep breath—among all these names of Italy he had read only one, unwritten: ‘Juliana.’ He closed the volume quietly and laid it back on the inner ledge of the office.

‘Thank you, ma’am,’ he said, ‘that is all I require.’

‘The lady has come for the waters, my lord,’ cried the hostess in a flutter. ‘I trust your lordship, begging your lordship’s pardon, will be so kind as not to intrude upon her in any way. The lady is in mourning, my lord, and—’ she broke off before the smile that parted the young man’s lips.

‘The lady will not be astonished to see me,’ said Wroth.

It curdled the blood in her veins (as she subsequently assured her husband). ‘And up the stairs it was with him then, three at a time!—He’s not safe, Tunstall, and so I tell you!’

CHAPTER XIV.

‘Now, in the name of heaven, my lady——’ cried Panton.

Juliana turned a white face vaguely towards her maid. With a weary movement she let the purple cloak slip from her shoulders

‘Pack it up, Panton,’ she said in an extinguished voice. ‘I shall go back to my mourning.’

‘My lady!’ ejaculated Panton again. Her usual volubility

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was at a loss before the sense of mysterious and strange event about her. Her mistress stretched out her left hand ; and the woman's eyes were instantly riveted on the unknown ring that hung heavily upon that finger whence Juliana had removed the familiar wedding circlet. She looked affrightedly back at the face above it.

' You have heard,' said Juliana in the same toneless way, ' of the odd marriage that has taken place in this town to-day ? '

The strings of Mrs. Panton's tongue were gladly loosed upon a subject she could tackle :

' Yes, and indeed, my lady ! That mad young gentleman with the wolves and bears, and that slut again (saving your ladyship's presence) whom I never could abear, and how she came to be here, turning up like a bad penny, for ever in our way ?—unless, indeed,' cried the woman, severely, ' it is after her you are again, notwithstanding all that's been and gone, and all this journey and tales of taking the waters a second wildgoose chase after the trollop ! Your ladyship's downright sinful—foolish, with your charities and rescues. You'll get naught better out of her now than before—and how she comes to be your ladyship's foster-sister with such a disposition will remain for ever a mystery to me !—aye, I've heard of the wedding this day. A pretty wedding indeed ! Has your ladyship been told how those bold, shameless hussies went to be chosen like cattle—and how— ? ' she paused suddenly in full flow : a curious mirthless smile had parted her mistress's lips.

' Panton—I was the bride ! '

' My lady—God save us ! '

' And this is my wedding ring.'

' Deliver us ! ' said Mrs. Panton, and sat down suddenly, for the trembling in her limbs.

' No, I did not come here for Peggy : I came for him. I knew no more than you that she was here. She would have married him. . . . I saved him from that ! I was wrong. He himself does not know.'

' My lady . . . ? '

' He may never know—Panton, give me the long gold chain.'

Dazed, Mrs. Panton rose from her chair and crept towards the jewel case on the table. In silence she handed the chain and watched her mistress slip the ring upon it, fasten it round her neck and hide it beneath the folds of her bodice. As she did so, rapidly, with dry tongue that scarce could do its office, Juliana gave her old nurse the story of the morning's work. Into the

woman's large perturbed countenance the while she listened crept a wholesome red again. Her eyes began to twinkle. Her lips twitched into a repressed smile.

'It's to be a secret, then, for the present, my lady,' she said, with a deep sigh,

'Yes, a dead secret,' answered Juliana. 'And you may pack again, Panton; for we shall leave to-morrow.'

'And where to, my lady?' asked the tirewoman, repressing with some difficulty an obvious remark about her mistress's desire for the waters.

'Where to?' Juliana hesitated. 'To my godfather's,' she said then with a note of yearning in her voice. 'There will be peace with him.'

She passed into her little sitting-room, listlessly taking up a book on her way. Mrs. Panton looked after her through the open door, winking and chuckling to herself; ejaculating astonishment upon gusto. She scented romance of the most exciting description. 'My lady Wroth, my lady Wroth.' For one thing, it had a better sound than that long foreign title in her British ear. And what a personable young man, and how wicked? It is quite in the correct order of things, to the Pantons of this world, that young noblemen should be wicked. They would not give a farthing for virtue. 'It was love at first sight,' said the woman to herself, 'and she's hung his ring over her heart!' She winked and chuckled again.

Juliana's eyes followed the words in the book before her uncomprehendingly. It was the latest publication of Lord Byron's, and all fashionable readers were mad about it. She herself had found much food for her thwarted aspiration in the new poet's coloured flights. But, to-day, it might have been a mathematical treatise for all that it meant for her.

She had read the same lines at least twenty times. She suddenly raised her head and hearkened. Along the passage there came a hasty tread, which halted before the door. An imperative knock—and before she had time to lay a hand upon her leaping heart, Wroth had entered.

He came swiftly to within a pace of her, and stood looking on her with eyes from which blazed reproach.

'Is it true?' he cried. 'Is it true that you were in that room this morning? That you were the woman with the black veil?'

Juliana gazed at him as if fascinated. Silently she inclined her head.

He clapped his hands together with a loud outcry.

‘Then you are free ! You, you in whom I had believed !’

The utter misery of the exclamation, the very fierceness of his wrath, brought balm into Juliana’s wounded soul. Her hand crept up to her wedding ring.

‘You are free !’ repeated he violently, ‘and now it is I who am bound ! . . . What fiend drove you to come and mock me, if you did mean to reveal yourself ?’

‘I came to save you,’ said Juliana. Something seemed to speak for her. In the turmoil that possessed her, she was hardly conscious of formulating the words. Her thought seemed to utter itself.

‘You came to save me !’ he repeated, while another step brought him menacingly close to her, ‘and, when you saw . . . what you saw, you did not think me worth the word ! O, God preserve me from a good woman !—What ! you shared with me that unforgettable hour, you gave yourself to me—you did !—’ his voice surged as if beating down on an unspoken protest, ‘you did, deny it if you dare—as no woman ever gave herself to man before, by the most sacred abandonment of the spirit. And you were free, you knew where to find me . . . and you never even wrote to me ! We were together again this very day, and you never spoke ! You let me go from you, let me prostitute my name, my honour, our love ; let me sell myself, and you, and our happiness, for money—O, false ! And then when it is done you come and taunt me with your unveiled countenance ! Heavens, if you did not so possess me, I could kill you ! But no, you shall not die, you shall live, and live for me !’

He flung himself on his knees beside her, his arms about her.

She had trembled under the tempest of his words, thrilled to his passion, exquisitely rejoiced at his despair. But all her chaste womanhood woke within her at these last words and at the touch he dared to lay upon her. Not thus—it could not be thus ! Here was something which no man had offered her before—eyes that shone with unholy fire, arms that trembled and grasped, lips that would have cursed and kissed together. It was not to bring him to this that she had humbled herself. She had thought to save him ; and lo ! here, claiming her, was something less than man, little more than brute ; claiming her whom he had called Una, her before whom the wolf itself had crouched.

She made no struggle in his clasp, but it seemed to him as

if she had turned to marble. He released her with a smothered oath ; then half rose pausing, one knee still on the ground, to measure her with a brutal arrogant gaze.

‘ And to think ! ’ he exclaimed with a laugh, ‘ that I let you go from me that night, at the abbey ! Oh, my dear, the long days, the wonderful hours we have wasted ! ’

Juliana cried out as if he had struck her.

‘ Wroth . . . ! ’

That night—that place where their hands had not even met—it all rose before her with its sacred memory, and she thought her heart must break to hear it profaned !

‘ You were mine. From the first instant we met, I deemed you a kind of spirit, deemed you something too ineffable to approach with aught but the spirit. I had a spirit for you, Juliana, a virgin fire. But now I know you otherwise—mere substance, as the rest of women, timid, vain, curious, ready to play with a man’s passion and warm yourself at its flame . . . always taking heed yourself not to be burned ! O, you are free—and it might have been ! ’ His voice rose again with an echo of the plaint she had known in the hour of the *Tenebrae* ; and it smote her afresh with mingled sorrows. ‘ It might have been . . . but your soul is no mate for mine. Had it been so, straight you would have come to me as I to you, once the cage bars broken. But, after all ’—his accents changed again, a bitter smile was on his lip, he scorned himself and her even as he spoke—‘ I am flesh and blood too ; and, before the Lord, I never saw the woman that was made for me till you shone out on me. Give me your hands, give me your lips, and then deny, if you dare, that you are mine ! ’

She rose abruptly, quivering from the horrible conflict in herself, and pointed to the door, with the voiceless word—‘ Go ! ’ He sprang to his feet likewise, and once again his arms hovered about her. Panting in her ear, his tone had dropped to the tender huskiness that had the power to stir her to the innermost fibre.

‘ O come with me ! —What will all the world be to us, once we are together ? Italy is your country, you told me—come with me to Italy, my Juliet—Wife ? ’ he cried wildly, ‘ you shall be my love, ’tis a hundred times better.’

‘ Indeed,’ said Juliana, finding voice and strength at last, ‘ I have already heard you, my lord, speak about a wife.’

Once again his arms fell away from her. Steel could not have been more cutting, ice colder, than her tone ; the dead more

unresponsive to his touch. He fell back a step, his eyes with their evil fire upon her. She was minded of the phosphorescent glare in the eyes of the wolf. So, this was all she was to him—something that called up the beast within him !

‘Lord Wroth,’ she said, ‘by stretching out my hand I can ring the bell, by raising my voice I can summon my servant from the next room. I do neither, for I know that you will leave me.’

A change came upon him, he cast a furtive glance at the bell rope, another at the door. The fire flickered and dropped in his eyes. Another second he stared in blank despair upon her ; then with a sudden frantic gesture, flung his arms high in the air, shook them above his head and let them fall. He took two steps to the door, wheeled round again on the threshold.

‘You are mine,’ he said in a new voice, low, threatening, yet controlled. ‘I shall never give you up. You shall never belong to anybody else.’

Pride spoke, not love. Pride and an indomitable will. Juliana swayed, as the door closed upon him, and sank into a chair—broken, stunned. She was unable to face the image of her own shame and desolation. Presently she became aware that Panton was beside her. The touch of the warm, womanly hands, the sound of the comfortable voice stirred some tender fibre in her paralysis of misery. Juliana, who had scarce wept since childhood, clung to her old nurse with sobs and tears ; and Mrs. Panton, forgetting all her dignity as tirewoman, soothed and petted her with the ‘lambs’ and ‘chucks’ of baby days.

‘Oh, Panton, you heard, you heard ?’ cried Juliana.

‘And, indeed,’ said Panton, still patting the lustrous hair, ‘I thought your ladyship was mortal unkind to the poor young nobleman—so you were, my lamb, when you could have made him so happy, just by a word. Not indeed that it will do him any harm to be kept waiting a bit, since there was so little courting—every woman should have her courting. But, eh, dear, my dove—how the man loves you, to be sure !’

‘He love me !’ cried Juliana, her eyes flashing in scorn through their tears. ‘He offered me shame, insult !’

‘Tut, tut,’ said philosophic Panton, ‘he wants you at any price. And,’ she added, ‘it would come a deal harder on you, my deary, if he didn’t.’

Juliana shuddered. She was not given to introspection, to subtle theorising, or even to parleying with conscience. Hers was

a large simple nature, and it was the soul, not the mind, that guided it. That soul saw but two alternatives : right or wrong. And its innate rectitude had known no hesitation between them, hitherto. But now, what was right seemed wrong—what was legally right was morally wrong. Above all her proud womanhood revolted from the outrage she had suffered, the more fiercely that something within her yet cried out to him like a wailing child.

His stress of passion drove Wroth blindly to seek the open air. He rushed out of the house that had this morning held such monstrous experiences for him, crossed the road and strode swiftly up the steep slopes of the common, towards Mount Ephraim, seeking nothing for the moment but the physical relief of action. Up through the brambly winding paths he went, unconscious of aught but the whirl of his thoughts ; as blind to the sunshine and spring cheer as he was deaf to the lark's song above his head and oblivious of the pungent scent of the gorse. He stamped hardy prickles and all kinds of delicate spring growths alike beneath his riding-boots as he swung along—halting at last at the foot of some giant boulders, to regain breath.

The little town nestled cosily below ; and beyond it was a fair view—folds upon folds of pastures, slopes of modest hills with greening wood spreading to faint in purple uplands, far away, against the sky. The beauty of the scene bit at his heart as he looked. Under those tiled gables, in yonder cup of the valley, was Juliana—Juliana, aye, and the woman he had just married ! Rapture and disgust ! He flung himself upon the grey stone ; and, with his chin upon his hand sat long, staring upon his misery, lost to all sense of time, to all consecutive thought or purpose.

When he roused himself at length, he could not have said whether he had spent on that stone minutes only or hours of profitless contemplation ; but the sun was already low, and the world was losing its colour. The spur of action was at his flank again : he must down once more to that house of tragic comedy, and again take up his part.

As he re-entered the banquet room, he swept a look of black inquiry about him—of the meagre wedding party, only two sat now at the board, Scaife and Sir Thomas, with a fresh bottle before them, and heads close together, so engrossed over a dice-box that they had not a look to spare for the new comer. For a moment

the bridegroom surveyed them in silence. Then, stretching out his hand, he snapped the dice-box from Scaife, who was just holding it poised between two fingers for a fresh throw.

'Hallo!' exclaimed the latter, and flung up a furious face, which cleared, however, at sight of the offender—cleared with a malicious pleasure, which was reflected on the countenance of his companion.

'Gad—'tis the bridegroom! By my soul, 'tis the bridegroom! Congratulate you,' said Sir Thomas, culling in his turn the box from Wroth's hand—'congratulate you, my dear boy, with all my heart!'

He laughed as he shook the dice, his eyes still on Wroth's face.

'My throw,' said Scaife, 'excuse me, Wroth.'

He shook, threw, and cursed. And Holroyd flinging himself back in his chair, laughed again consumedly. Wroth frowned ever more heavily. A short while ago this sort of laughter had been his.

'What are you laughing at? Being my friend, I suppose you laugh because I've just put through the most damnable piece of folly ever a man blasted his life with? What are you laughing at? Because I, Wroth, Wroth, have tied a millstone round my neck?'

Scaife brought two languid palms together, twice.

'Very well done, George! By gad, you'd have made an actor!'

'How?' cried Holroyd, suddenly stopping in his cachinnation to prick an alert ear. 'How? You don't mean to say it was planned? That it was all a got-up thing? . . . Oh, oh!—He succumbed again to rich mirth, ejaculating at intervals: 'Gad, the joke is complete—and Martindale too! Gad, you're both actors! As for her ladyship—why, 'tis her profession. Aha, collared grandpapa's money bags, obliged a friend, rid yourself of a wife. Everyone pleased all round! O, gad! Gad! Hold me, somebody, or I shall split.'

'Stop that talk, or I'll kill you!' exclaimed Wroth.

He turned a look of livid fury from man to man.

'O dem!' said Scaife wearily, 'let's get on with our game. Go away, Wroth, there's a dear fellow. Go and champ somewhere else, and let us get on with our game. We were tossing which shall have the riding of that bay mare of yours, while this fine open weather lasts.'

‘Where’s Martindale?’ said Wroth, in a low dry voice.

‘He’s gone off with your wife—as you know quite as well as we do,’ retorted Scaife acridly. ‘Your millstone is comfortably rolling away, away to London. Now, sit down and drink, there’s my good lad! Tom, you throw.’

Yet a little while Wroth paused, looking at them. He had been their complacent host, month after month; his coffers, his cellar, his stables—theirs, to use and misuse. He had been king of revels, prince of friends; and, when material ruin menaced, none could leave the sinking ship fast enough—but it was only now, when moral ruin encompassed him, that he measured to the full the value of his boon companions.

Martindale was gone with the woman who now bore the name of Wroth—Martindale whom, alone among his comrades, he had taken into his real friendship; whose weak defection he had even just forgiven; who owed him (pah! that he should remember it!) bounties as endless as they had been delicate. And these two, his month-long guests, threw meanwhile for his best horse. For his honour, his degradation they had nothing but laughter and sneers. A physical passion of anger seized him—a rage of destruction. He knew what he had to do; it could not too quickly be done.

He turned on his heel and went without a word. Presently the gamblers, through the window, hearing him call peremptorily for his curricle, his groom—and his pistol case—dropped the thread of their game, to look at each other, startled, stirred by a not disagreeable curiosity.

‘What the deuce is Wroth up to?’ said Holroyd the talkative. ‘You never can tell with the fellow. After his frenzy in the vestry and that pretty wedding speech, one might have betted all one was worth that he wanted to be rid of the woman. But gad, man, the fellow looked murder, didn’t you think, just now? And hark to him!’ he added, jerking his head towards the window.

‘Wroth is wedded to pistols,’ said the other sententiously, ‘he’ll never divorce them. And, as for what he wants, dem it, you shall have it in five words—Wroth always wants, what he has not got!’

(To be continued.)

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